

A REVIEW OF LITERATURE AND ART

Horizon

EDITED BY CYRIL CONNOLLY

BIRDS OF JOY AND CARE. BY VERNON WATKINS

THE LIFE CYCLE OF AN INTERPERSON. BY LLOYD FRANKENBERG

THE NEXT STAGE IN POETRY. BY MAURICE BOWRA

BROKEN MINDS. BY STEFAN SCHIMANSKI

LOUIS LE BROCQUY. BY EARNÁN O. MALLEY

BACK TO ITALY AND GREECE. BY RAYMOND MORTIMER

HENRY JAMES'S YEAR IN FRANCE. BY MERVYN JONES-ÉVANS

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CHATTO & WINDUS

HORIZON

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VERNON WATKINS
BIRDS OF JOY AND CARE

Look where in light the lark
Dares diamond heavenbreak, high
Mounting above the dark,
And fills the sky
With sparkling printless notes the spectres perish by.
That sun-exalted sound
Leaps like a fountain, shed
On five brown eggs the ground
Lays bare in dread,
Cloistered by windblown grass where clumsy cattle tread.
Torn from the breviary
Of graves, the monk's-hood mind
And coffined aviary
Of wings confined,
Ascending to receive that gift no thought could find,
Praising the suffered light,
He makes all heaven the field
Of his inspired delight,
And shows revealed
The glorious christening fire whose covenant Christ has sealed.
That ecstasy were man's,
But evening brings unrest.
He sees the ptarmigans
Guarding their nest,
And hears a plover's cry fall wounded towards the West.
Plumage rides the air
All day, all night, for lovers:
Birds of joy and care;
The haunted plovers
Darkly express the doubt a hidden fear discovers.
Rending low heaven like flails,
Like tearing silk, they fling
Terror to earth; one trails
A broken wing,
Deception and disguise on humans practising.

Birds cry all night, all day,
 Spring night and Autumn night,
 Then the moor's moult of grey
 Alters with snow to white.
 White on that whitening ground, the mountain grouse unite.

So thrive the ptarmigans,
 Flock, and match earth to feather.
 Saint Francis with blind hands
 In larks' sweet weather
 Pulls to the breaking year seasons and birds together;

Preaches to them aloud,
 Then says: 'O Christ, hear me:
 Your angels in the cloud
 Take from this tree
 The harp they play that gives these wings their symmetry.

Pledge with your heavenly ring
 These birds, by faith made wise,
 That though the songs men sing
 Follow the fashion's guise,
 They still may cleave to heaven, and sing with praising eyes.'

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 4. Entries will be considered up to 10 September.
- The winning entries will be published.

LLOYD FRANKENBERG
THE LIFE CYCLE
OF AN INTERPERSON

NOTE

The Life Cycle of an Interperson is a didactic poem based on the psychoanalytic theory of Dr. Harry Stack Sullivan, founder of the school of 'interpersonal relations'. Dr. Sullivan's conceptions of psychiatry are regarded by a considerable group of analysts as constituting a significant advance on the pioneering work of Sigmund Freud. Not all his theory is in the poem. 'That', as he said, 'would be impossible.' The definitions that follow are not quite those of Dr. Sullivan and the Washington School of Psychiatry. On the other hand, they are not quite *not*.

Hark! the angel psychiatric
Sings: '*Euphoria in syntactic!*'

I

The INFANT'S *prototaxic* bliss
Is tension that releases
(He's father to the man in this).
His world does little but exist,
Timeless, without dimension.
It hardly comes to his attention
Where he leaves off and it begins.
He only knows it spins and spins
And he's the axis.

2

But speech is metamorphosis:
The yell that acts like magic
Begins his *parataxic*
Communication hit-or-miss
With mother who for better or worse
Is new his CHILDHOOD universe,
Companion, chef, chauffeur and nurse.

Before the babe is even bestial
The little beast is half a man
(Vestigial mammalian)

HORIZON

The animal has suffered shrinkage
By means of this *emotional linkage*,
Which Freud regarded as incestual.
We say, unless she's ursinal,
They're getting *interpersonal*.

By a unique telepathy
Or two-way hookup (empathy)
They share a secret sympathy.
Her pleasure is inherent,
Or else she is no parent
And he will suffer apathy,
Which for a person of his age
Is worse than *terror, fear or rage*.
Instead of rearing, flailing, weeping,
This Interwarrior
Resorts to wakeful sleeping—
A most dispheric *euphoria*.

But say all's well. He grows apace
Displaying muscular agility
(Pleasure in testing his ability).
Euphoria goes up and down.
The *dynamism* in his face
Responding now to smile or frown
Replaces mere satiety
With wish-to-please *anxiety*
(Ushering in psychiatry).

He'd rather please than eat (sometimes).
He stops his stamping feet (sometimes)
And modulates his yelling
To alphabets and spelling,
Love in his anxious heart upwelling
Because she is so sweet (sometimes).

3

With loss of first enamel he
Becomes a JUVENILE.
Escaping from his family
(At least a while),

He takes his place among his compeers
 With ears still wet
 And meets society in rompers,
 The kindergarten set.

The circus of his days contains
 More rings than Saturn's.
 It never pours but what it rains
Multiple 'me-you' patterns.

So interpersonal two by twos
 Will bicker ever which is whose,
 Confusing effects for causes.
 His syllables, still *parataxic*,
 Begin to lose their pristine magic.
 He learns conditional clauses.

Although his new vocabulary
 Might fetch out the constabulary,
 It's not, as once, infallible.
 The others' errors enter in,
 Marring the perfect might-have-been—
 Like Eve, who brought original sin
 When the world's roll was callable.

4

He sifts the many into some:
 Among the some there's one
 Who maybe gets, like him, a zero
 Or maybe's not so dumb.
 In short, our interhero
 Selects an interchum.

Whose every mutual wish or whim
 Is equally all right with him.
 Perhaps they like to fish or swim;
 It's interacquiescent.
 They don't get home till very late
 Since they both reciprocate.
 Happy PREADOLESCENT!

So far our interperson, X,
 Considering the other sex
 Observes its hair conceals its necks.
 He doesn't know women at all
 Till in the presence
 Of ADOLESCENCE
 He goes in heavily
 For a new style of reverie,
 Which we refer to (when at all)
 As, unquote, *inter-genital*.

Ah! little inter-Gene!
 The apple is so green.
 His state now tends to fluctuate
 With every passing rhythm.
 ADOLESCENCE
 Is too much with him
 EARLY and LATE.
 Instead of studying his lessons
 He wanders cattle-tracks and horse-roads,
 Rueing the day.
 His wishes pass like loads of hay.
 Biology supplies the traction,
 But he—he's just an interaction,
 An interperson at the crossroads.

His *self*, that 'only child of anxiety',
 Is less himself than ever.
 He sighs his lost schoolboy complexion.
 His innocence returneth never
 And guilt's so far away.
 The world is full of intersections;
 He's like to go in all directions
 But finds his travel limited
 Because he's so inhibited.
 Above his head, like a homing vulture,
 There hangs the weight of Western Culture.

By means of Queen Victoria
 And such repressive instruments
 His pretty low *euphoria*
 Is lowered into depths immense
 And then still further.
 His life's just one damn *dynamism*
 After another.
 Piling abysm on abysm.

6

Unless by magic fluke,
 Like Mozart in a juke,
 He meets an interperson willing
 To intersperse his board and bed,
 Commingling person and opinion
 Without submission or dominion
 Or other sorts of mutual killing.
 If so, they're wed.

We leave him in this state occult:
 A full-fledged interpersonal ADULT.

7

Whose *Prototaxic* lies so deep
 He doesn't quite know what it is.
 It isn't something in his sleep
 Like all those old Subconsciouses.
 It's not a mystic kind of squid
 Like *ego*, *superego*, *id*
 (Which are, for our investigation,
 Works of supererogation);
 Perhaps a residue of beast
 That somehow sits in at the feast.

His *Parataxic*, evident
 When with his friends his elbow's bent
 And he has little on his mind,
 Is something largely voluble,
 Though to his friends insoluble.
 He's quite magnificently vocal.

But his *awareness* isn't focal.

(For most of what we call mankind
The irritation's purely local.)

Syntactic is the state he's after:
Not to be hodgy-podgy
With utterances magical,
Ideas that give to laughter.
But if he's neat and logical
He may be safe but stodgy,
For then there lurks the Nemesis
Of starting from false premises,
Thinking his errors mystical
Because they are statistical.

X tries to organize his thought
(Like finding the square root of nought).
Poor little interperson!
X thinks until X hurts.
But X would spare himself much trouble
This principle with us rehearsing:
'*Syntactic* is communicable
To other *syntactic* experts'.

★ ★ ★

Hark! the angel psychiatric
Sings: '*Euphoria* in *syntactic*!'

Let Œdipus go back to Greece
And take with him *libido*.
Let talk of *drive* and *complex* cease.
Recite no Freudian credo.

We ask not, 'What's your dream?'
But, 'How's your *self-esteem*?'

There dawns an interpersonal day
And psychoanalytic senates

Like wily Arabs, fold their tenets
and silently steal away

To meet the *interpersonal* man
(Investigated by Sullivan),

Who lives and dies (Peace to his ways!)
An X in interstellar space!

GLOSSARY

Euphoria: Well-being. Infants have it, occasionally.

Infant: A primitive being, rapidly deteriorating into a child.

Prototaxic (n. and adj.): The way infants think before they think. We still do it, without quite knowing.

Parataxic: The way you think when you can't explain it to me.

Syntactic: The way I think when I *can* explain it to you—if you're bright enough to get it.

Tension: Tension. Things, or their absence, cause it, e.g., food.

Anxiety: Worse than *tension*. People cause it. In order to avoid it we put up with tension. Or anything else.

Childhood: Roughly from baby's first word to his interest in, roughly, other children.

Apathy: A powerful expression of powerlessness. When babies have it it's bad. When grown-ups have it it's frequently a good idea.

Terror, Fear, Rage: Bad states to be in.

Dynamism (Here's where the fun begins). A process of tendencies, or system of capacities. (Or incapacities.) The *Oral Dynamism* has to do with things like speech; which, as you can readily see, can be an ability or an inability.

Multiple 'Me-You' Patterns: I have my idea of you. You have your idea of me. I have my idea of your idea of me, etc. Multiply by as many people as are in a room (or *think* they're in a room).

Preadolescent: Chum-choosing (platonic).

Self (Here's where the fun ends). The *self-system*, or *self-dynamism*: Dynamism of dynamisms, a relatively enduring, but developing, configuration (need we go on?) of processes, or systems of capacities. Not you as you think you are. Not you as others see you. You as you operate; or as your interpersonal processes might be charted by a skilled 'participant-observer' (psychiatrist).

Subconscious: Not in as good repute as heretofore, since it postulates a *Conscious*.

Ego, Superego, Id: Freudian supercargo.

Focal Awareness: Genius has it.

Self-esteem: 'It is not "As ye judge, so shall ye be judged"; but "As you judge yourself, so will you judge others".'

MAURICE BOWRA

THE NEXT STAGE IN POETRY

MODERN war is no friend to poetry. The vast, mechanized effort which it demands of everyone is too exacting and too exhausting to allow creative work, and the violent sensations of battle dull and stun the poetical sensibility. But the experience which war gives, the extension of horizons and the new knowledge of human nature which it brings, sooner or later touch poetry and give it a new direction. The First World War strengthened and simplified certain tendencies which were noticeable before 1914 but were still the concern of small groups. In 1919 the various schools of literary rebels, Modernists, Futurists, Ultraists, Imagists and the like, had found their spheres of work and by relaxing some of their more stringent tenets made their contribution to the poetry of the succeeding years. Between 1919 and 1939 poets in most parts of Europe conducted a bold and exciting experiment. Their aim was to bring poetry closer to its real self and to make it more vivid, more intense and more contemporary. Even their peculiarities, their abrupt methods of transition, their uncertainty of tone, their deliberate bathos and anti-climax, reflected existing conditions of mind, and their most representative works, like Mayakovsky's *150,000,000* and Eliot's *The Waste Land*, revealed, even if from quite different angles, the disturbed spirit of the age. But even before 1939 it was clear that this dynamic, electrical art was becoming more serious and more traditional. Young poets who began under the influence of an ebullient Modernism felt the need for a more staid means of expression, and older poets, who had enjoyed all the thrills of a literary revolution, were almost ready to take things more easily and to return to methods which they had discarded in their first fine frenzy. We may therefore ask if the Second World War furthered this tendency and what the prospects now are.

At a first look the last seven years seem to have simplified poetry in an unexpected and almost undesirable way. Poets, who ten years ago practised the most up-to-date methods of hint and

allusion, and seemed likely to become more and more esoteric, have given up many of their more exquisite airs. Paul Eluard, the French Surrealist, who not long ago pursued the delicate art of suggestion to its furthest refinements, has abruptly changed his manner and taken to writing poems of a remarkable innocence. Boris Pasternak, the most gifted and original of living Russian poets, has in his pieces on the war moved away from his old condensed, startling style to something much easier and indeed more commonplace. Rafael Alberti, exiled from Spain to the Argentine, has in *Pleamar* turned from the concentrated, suggestive, introspective art of his noble *Sobre los Angeles* to something drier and more extrovert. Where the great figures have set the lead, the lesser have followed, and today much poetry is being written which seems to have severed its connection with the more striking elements of Modernism and to be seeking a new art which is in closer touch with ordinary life and makes some sacrifices in strength that it may be clear and easy.

But this impression, powerful though it is, is probably deceptive. The change in the manner of Eluard and Pasternak and Alberti is not to be found in all their recent work, and when it appears, it may be referred directly to the influence of political events. Eluard's simplified poetry is his contribution to the needs of his country, whether under German domination or in the throes of rebirth after liberation. Pasternak's poems about the war must to some extent have been shaped by his desire to do something for his country in her need and to show that he, who was unable to take part in the fighting, was able to make his contribution to the national spirit. Alberti, haunted by the spectre of a ruined and ravaged Spain, and himself a retired soldier of the Republican army, naturally turns his thoughts to practical problems and sometimes writes with an immediate purpose. But, while these poets sometimes write in this way, they do not always do so. Eluard has recently published *Une Longue Réflexion Amoureuse*, which has nothing to do with politics and is concerned completely with love. In Pasternak's *Terrestrial Space* there are some enchanting poems which keep all his old pantheistic feeling for nature and his surprising power of vivid and exact observation. There are many recent poems of Alberti in which he shows his mastery of the evocative song or his gift for imaginative eloquence. Though at times these three poets have made concessions to some

demand, from within or without, for a simplified poetry which shall serve an immediate, practical purpose, they have not always done so. They continue to exercise their real powers as before. We should be wrong to judge the present trends of European poetry by what seems to be on the whole a superficial and perhaps transitory phenomenon in it.

At the same time there is in the best of the recent poetry of Eluard, Pasternak and Alberti a new manner, even a new spirit. They have learned the lessons of the poetical experiments made between the two wars. Their language is fresh and vivid: their rhythms respond with natural ease to their moods: they are emphatically truthful and realistic: their poetry is poetry and nothing else. So far they profit by the hard work of poets in the years after 1919 and are their immediate heirs. But they have something else, something new and unexpected, which is their own and belongs to their own time. Nor are they alone in this. Similar changes and developments can be seen in other leading poets of the day, in Edith Sitwell, Pierre Jean Jouve and Cecil Day Lewis. And the younger poets, Sidney Keyes, Dylan Thomas and Pierre Emmanuel, seem to have come naturally to this latest manner without any previous novitiate. Something has happened and is happening to European poetry and indicates that the Second World War has given coherence to latent tendencies and revealed them to the world.

This latest poetry develops directly from that written between the two wars, but it differs in technique and in spirit. Its technique is less abrupt and less startling. There is a less determined concentration on the immediate poetical effect, and more attention to the part played by the intellect in an aesthetic experience. The imagery, still brilliant and powerful and all-important, is less recklessly disposed, and the result is less cloudy and less disturbing. For instance in *L'Amour, La Poesie*, published in 1929, Eluard did not make his images clear so long as they suggested something exciting. He writes a short poem on a kiss:

Bouches gourmandes des couleurs
Et les baisers qui les dessinent
Flamme feuille l'eau langoureuse
Une aile les tient dans sa paume
Un rire les renverse.

Such a poem cannot be analysed or explained. It appeals to the unconscious more than to the conscious mind: it exploits the vaguer moods in the poet's experience, and its effect comes through the echoes that it stirs in us. In his latest poetry Eluard again writes of a kiss, but is much more lucid and classical in *Le Baiser*:

Toute tiède encore du linge annulé
 Tu fermes les yeux et tu bouges
 Comme bouge un chant qui naît
 Vaguement mais de partout
 Odorante et savoureuse
 Tu dépasses sans te perdre
 Les frontières de ton corps
 Tu as enjambé le temps
 Te voici femme nouvelle
 Révélée à l'infini.

The later poem moves with a much greater ease than the earlier. It is simpler and lighter, more graceful and more musical. The images are equally bright, the movement of the words equally subtle. But whereas before all was echo and suggestion, now the whole effect makes a direct appeal through the understanding.

In this Eluard is typical of poets in many countries. The same loosening of muscles, the same delicate clarity, can be seen in other poets of equal eminence. If we compare the calcined, stifling world of Alberti's *Sobre los Angeles* with his latest poem in memory of Lorca, we can see how he has moved to a more regular movement and a more careful balance of effects:

Yo levanto mi angustia, mi aliento encanecidos,
 nostálgicos de balas y sueños capitanes.
 Diez muertes que brotaran mis diez dedos serían
 pocas contra la muerte de una luna tan grande.

Louis Aragon has tried many kinds of verse in his time, but in *Le Crève-cœur* he turns his consummate mastery of verse-making to an almost classical ease when he speaks of the fall of France:

Ils contemplaient le grand désastre sans comprendre
 D'où venait le fléau ni d'où venait le vent
 Et c'est en vain qu'ils interrogaient les savants
 Qui prenaient après coup des mines de Cassandre.

Edith Sitwell has passed from the fierce accumulation of effects in *Gold Coast Customs* to a more generous sweep, even when she deals with material which might have fitted into the earlier poem, as in

• There was great lightning
In flashes to us over the floor:
The whiteness of the Bread,
The whiteness of the Dead
The whiteness of the Claw;
All this coming to us in flashes through the open door.

Cecil Day Lewis has left the track of Hopkins and Auden for a more staid, more considered manner, in which he loses none of his strength or deftness:

Lost the archaic dawn wherein we started,
The appetite for wholeness: now we prize
Half-loaves, half-truths—enough for the half-hearted,
The gleam snatched from corruption satisfies.
Dead youth, forgive us if, all but defeated,
We raise a trophy where your honour lies.

These examples are chosen almost at random, and they all show a movement in the same direction, a greater ease and a looser texture than advanced poets thought permissible twenty years ago.

This change in technique has been accompanied by a more subtle but no less powerful change in spirit. In their desire to be truthful at all costs and to say no more than they really meant, the poets of the 'twenties took a somewhat private and personal view of poetry. They were the inheritors of a highly individualistic tradition and believed that the poet stands above and apart from society. This did not prevent them from writing sometimes about subjects of world-wide significance, but they tended to do so in a highly individual manner. The catastrophe which Eliot describes in *The Waste Land* may be that of modern civilization, but it is presented almost as if it were the poet's own. Even Mayakovsky's revolutionary *Mystery-Bouffe* is full of the poet's own likes and dislikes, while Pasternak's poems on the Russian Revolution, written between 1917 and 1922, lack any trace of general emotion: they are personal documents and show how the epoch-making events struck him in his private being. This personal approach

to public events was justified by the belief that political poetry ceases to be poetry at all when the poet speaks not from his own feelings and experience but from what he imagines those of others to be and uses not his own ideas but those of the Press and the platform. But it is possible to write of public affairs with a wider understanding and yet not to lose the truly creative touch. It is simply a question of how far the poet can assimilate the events of his time and respond truthfully to them. The poets of the 'twenties shrank from this: the later poets have taken up the challenge and written noble poetry about the state of the world in which they live.

The last ten years have seen a splendid and varied poetry about political and public events. The Spanish Civil War inspired Alberti to poems of a tragic grandeur: the fall of France turned Eluard, Jouve and Emmanuel to work of a noble pathos and apocalyptic splendour: the air raids of 1940 inspired Edith Sitwell to a fierce compassion for the woes of humanity. The earlier Modernists, of whom Ezra Pound was a characteristic example, were less concerned to pity mankind than to mock it. Even Eliot has never shown any great warmth for it and prefers the distaste which its vulgarity and failures awake in him. Pound and Eliot are still exponents of the old view that artists live in their own world and need not trouble themselves too much about common men. But poetry lives on life and cannot sever itself too far from it without greatly impoverishing itself. The completely detached artist cannot really exist, and the greater an artist's detachment the greater is the risk that the springs of his inspiration will dry up. The new poets have seen this danger and avoided it. The cry of agonized humanity has touched them in their hearts and made them respond with warmth and power. Poetry has come back to human life and found new strength in it.

There seems, then, to be a tendency in poetry to return to ease and simplicity without losing any of the hard-won gains in power and effectiveness which an age of experiments gave to it and to speak about contemporary events without weakening the individual note which is the hall-mark of creative art. Such a tendency may lead in unforeseen directions, and of course it is much too early to say where it will end. But one question presents itself at the start. Is it possible for poetry to become simpler and to be more in touch with common events without losing the special fineness

and quality which it now possesses? Is not this return to older manners and methods a retreat from the high standards which poets of this century have set themselves, and does it not inevitably mean some vulgarization and diminution of power?

A glance round the European scene does not give an answer, but it suggests certain possibilities. The simplification which we have noticed is partly the result of a political doctrine that poetry must serve immediate social needs. We cannot dismiss this doctrine as absurd. Good, even great poetry, may treat of immediate needs, as many passages in Horace, Dante, Camoens and Milton show. Indeed, many fine poets have written well about such subjects, and their awareness of contemporary needs is one of their claims to respect from posterity. The large output of Russian poetry during the recent war shows that such a doctrine, officially sponsored and enforced by ingenious sanctions, may produce work of considerable interest. But there is none the less a danger in the specially modern application of the doctrine. The poet is expected and sometimes ordered to write about contemporary themes. Even without outside pressure he may none the less feel that it is his duty to do so. Now the workings of the creative faculty are so strange and so incalculable that it cannot respond with its full powers to every theme that government or public opinion or conscience demands of it. It can produce something, but that something will not often be of the best quality. Though young Russian poets, like Konstantin Simonov and Olga Bergoltz, have written good poems about the war, they have written others which are less good and which, though their ideas and temper meet an immediate demand, lack the appeal of authentic poetry. Even a great artist like Eluard seems to fall below his proper level when he writes not from an inner conviction but from a desire to say the right thing. The danger of this outlook is that it encourages work which lacks something essential to any true poetry, and it means that poets fail in their real task. The renewal of life which poetry brings comes only when the poet gives of his very best. To ask something else of him is to encourage poor work, and those who make this demand may even frustrate their own ends, since second-rate poetry is ineffective even as propaganda.

This is a special case, and its causes lie outside the natural development of poetry. But the tendency to bring poetry closer

to the common man raises another no less important question. Few would deny that in its early years Modernist poetry was moving further and further away not merely from the ordinary man but from the educated reader. It was esoteric and private. This tendency has been curbed, and we may ask how far the reaction will go in the other direction. It is natural and right that a poet who is concerned with current events should wish to be understood and appreciated by a large number of men and women. For this he must make concessions to their understanding and say what they can appreciate, even if he must educate them to do so. The question is simply whether in so doing he must sacrifice too much of what is really essential to his art and turn his poetry into rhetoric or some other substitute. This certainly can happen. When Mayakovsky began his creative career he was a wonderfully gifted poet, and everything that he wrote, however strange and unprecedented, had the appeal of authentic poetry. But the Russian Revolution caught him. He felt its tremendous appeal and gave his services to it. Wishing to do his best for the new age, he changed his art. The result is far from negligible. Mayakovsky was a great rhetorician, a master of telling phrases and emphatic effects. But his later poetry has lost the magic of his first work. He knew what he was doing and made no secret of his choice:

But I
 mastered myself
 and trod
On the throat
 of my very own songs.

As a public figure Mayakovsky succeeded, but as a poet he suffered. Is it not possible that others, equally gifted, may make the same decision and the same sacrifice?

There is an alternative solution. It is possible to write poetry on popular subjects which has a wide appeal and is none the less poetry and nothing else. A conspicuous example is Lorca's *Romancero gitano*, a flawless work of art in which modern technique and brilliance portray familiar subjects in the life of the common people of southern Spain. This poetry, which appeals so powerfully to the highly educated, appeals no less to the uneducated and illiterate. Arturo Barca tells how a member of the

Republican militia, with no claims to culture, could recite Lorca's *Romance de la Guardia civil*, and said 'He makes you see and smell the Civil Guard'. Nor was this case by any means unique. In the Civil War the poetry not only of Lorca but of Alberti and Miguel Hernandez was recited to large popular audiences and quoted by all kinds of men. Of course the Spanish situation is in some respects peculiar. The poets can appeal to many common ideas and to a traditional outlook. Life is less specialized and differentiated than in most European countries, and the poet's images, drawn from a world known to everyone, come home with easy and immediate effect. But the lesson is too striking to be dismissed. It shows that the need of a popular appeal and the use of popular themes need not necessarily detract from a poem's power and purity, and that a modern manner, with its exactness and truthfulness, is a powerful instrument when a master uses it.

It is surely possible that what Lorca did in Spain other poets may do elsewhere. Eluard seems to be trying to do something of the kind in France, and if some of his experiments have cost too much, there is no final reason why he should not find a happy balance between his old and new styles and become both a popular and a great poet. Variegated though the social systems of France and England are, and much though they have lost in their traditional heritage, there still exists a large common experience on which poets can work and to which they can appeal. New movements in education should, if they do their duty properly, increase this common element. Broadcasting does something to make poetry known and to encourage a new kind of poetical drama, and it is more successful than many listeners like to admit. The great increase in reading which has come with the war may not be a temporary anodyne, and poetry has not been so widely read for many years. The need and the desire for poetry are clear enough, and the poets have responded to it with a change in their art and a new sense of responsibility. Is it too much to hope that the Philistinism, which has been steadily decreasing since the beginning of the century, may decrease even more and that poetry may find a new and extended activity with its new harmonies and its contact with living men?

STEFAN SCHIMANSKI

BROKEN MINDS

'GIVE me ten years', Hitler once said, 'and you shall not recognize Germany again.' Perhaps of all his utterances, this was the truest he ever made. For Germany of yesterday bears no resemblance to Germany of today—at least not on the surface. The hard and brutal faces have vanished with the discarded uniforms; the superior feeling and the swaggering, the order and iron discipline which once kept a world awake at night, have disappeared. Instead of the rigid military formations which symbolized Hitler's Germany, a vast, uncontrolled and shapeless rabble has emerged out of the humility of defeat to efface the record of the past. As in every house the pictures of the fallen gods have been removed, revealing a light space on the wall which betrays their former presence, so the whole of Germany unsuccessfully tries to disguise the years of dictatorship. In place of the old, the country has donned a still older dress. It is the cloak of servility and docility, it is a mask that appears willing to please and to serve, to submit and obey. But this again may be nothing but an outward appearance.

What is the true face underneath the exterior I do not know. I doubt if anyone does—I do not think even the Germans do. They are a bewildering people. It would be futile to try to analyse their mind. It does not exist. It changes daily to fit every occasion. It is only of momentary value and depends entirely on outer circumstances. Increase the food rations and the barometer rises; lower the rations and the needle falls again. Only one thing is certain in the midst of all this uncertainty: the German mind, sapped of all initiative, driven into an attitude of submission, has remained subjected. It has no strength of its own because it has no aim of its own. Like the negro in America who has learned to give the pleasing answer to the all-mighty white man, the German today waits before giving an answer to the all-mighty member of the occupying forces. The only thing the Germans know is that it does not pay not to dance to the piper's tune. But whether they would revolt if they had the means and

start preparations for a war of revenge if they had the tools; whether they would vote overwhelmingly in favour of the Nazis if given free elections or whether they have genuinely done with the old and are determined to start anew if it were left to their choice—these questions, I feel, cannot be answered in the collective sense.

I remember a Press Conference which Mrs. Roosevelt gave when she visited Berlin and in the course of which she reversed the normal procedure of such conferences by asking the Allied correspondents their views on German problems. 'Who of you', she wanted to know, 'thinks the Germans have done with the Nazis?' Opinions on that question were equally divided for and against. 'This', Mrs. Roosevelt wisely summed up the position, 'clearly proves that it is impossible to know the German mind.'

But all the same one cannot fail to draw certain conclusions of the average German's attitude to life. What does he think? How does he live? are the two most obvious questions, and the answer to the second is not difficult: they live as best they can, exactly as everyone in any country would under similar circumstances. They live among ruins, in cellars, in any habitable part of any damaged building. They live sometimes five, sometimes eight in a flat, and life continues fairly normally in these abnormal circumstances. Flower-pots occasionally brighten the windows, children are being born and play among the ruins; they go to school as adults go to work; people sometimes laugh and make love; sometimes they are in pain and die, and life goes on, primitively most of the time, but not in an atmosphere of resignation. To resign or despair you must first of all have an aim that you cannot attain. Despair is the other side of striving. Therefore, if you have nothing to strive for, you cannot despair. And since the Germans have no ultimate aim, they cannot resign themselves to giving it up. Their only concern is with the present and the immediate future, with the problems of shelter and food. These problems make life grim and hard, but they are never insoluble. Once we have reached the stage of the animal or the robot, things become much easier: expectations have been killed and the process of thinking arrested. Life becomes tranquil again. There is nothing outside shelter and food.

All across Germany one finds this appalling lack of enthusiasm that has covered the countryside like a contagious disease. There

is no wish to participate in reconstruction; no desire to make sacrifices; no attempt to uproot the evil Hitler implanted in the German soil from inside. The Germans sit back, with their hands folded, and watch the development of events and the work of the allied troops; and the prestige of each of the four occupying powers depends entirely on their ability to meet the German demands for food and shelter and heat.

The fact that the Allies brought liberty back to Germany is ignored. To claim such an achievement for the Allies may appear sweeping. After all, the Germans have been given various forms of self-government but in reality they have no executive power—not even to resign from the offices to which they have been appointed. They have newspapers—which implies freedom of speech and criticism, but this again is only theoretical. And yet the Allies did bring liberty. They abolished the atmosphere of fear and terror that hung over Germany; they did away with the concentration camps and (I am speaking about the West now) they did not open them again; they have removed the informer-system that kept continual watch on every step and utterance of every neighbour; they have destroyed the privileges which went with the possession of a party membership card and thus eliminated this further class-distinction; and, most important of all, the police force (again in the West) was made to serve and protect once more instead of to rule and to arrest.

On the whole, the Germans have not responded to this new-found liberty. In fact, by abstaining from participation, in expecting more and more from outside, and in thinking that the burden of the future would have to be borne by the Allies, the Germans have done a disservice to the Allies. For this they will not be able to escape criticism.

Nor have their attempts to whitewash their past individually contributed to a solution of their problem. It is almost impossible to find in Germany today a man who admits his former convictions. Almost everyone will confess to having helped a Jew at some time or another or to have hidden at least one Allied airman. Of course, these certificates can now be bought (no doubt for a few Allied cigarettes). This cowardice is appalling, it tears the mask from the hero and reveals the physical brute. And equally appalling is the lack of sympathy among Germans for the returning soldiers. When they came into Berlin, filthy and in

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rags like deflated heroes, the population turned away in embarrassment. Supermen in victory, these soldiers had now become undesirable nuisances. Self-help among Germans and concern for the genuine victims of Fascism is almost non-existent. This is defeat in its ultimate degree. It is the defeat of the mind. And no outside power can kill the mind. This is an internal process which alone is deadly.

At first sight the German scene presents a Dostoyevskian nightmare without borderline between good and evil, where no motives can be traced with certainty and no truth established any longer. A cigarette given as a tip may be nothing more than a cigarette. But it may also be a fortune. And it is impossible to distinguish between the two. A young boy carrying luggage at a railway station will be a millionaire by the end of a week's work while a university professor will eke out an uncomfortable living on his meagre rations. A man can live for a paltry sum for a whole week, yet to buy one single cigarette will upset his entire budget. Everything has been derailed. There is as little relationship between yesterday and today as there is between a quarry and a cathedral. And yet it is the quarry that provides the stones for the building of the cathedral. Where then, is the link?

The link is in the understanding.

The Germans *are* a sorry, unlovable lot. All of them, whether they are politically conscious or not, whether they are Nazis or Communists, Liberals or Christians, alike lack independence. The process of their de-personalization has been so thorough and complete that Hitler could still rise from his grave and point with pride to the heritage he left behind. The Germans today are living proof of the evil inherent in the belief that a person has no life of his own, that he is merely an individual whose body and soul belong to the State and whose moral conscience is subject to and dependent on the demands of the State.

Very well, remove the State and see what happens to the individual and his moral conscience. A house is built with a scaffolding around it to assist in its building. When the house is finished the scaffolding can be removed and the house will remain. But when it is chained to the scaffolding; when instead of only supporting the structure in its growing stages, the independent structure grows into the construction and becomes one with it, then the house will forever remain chained to its

protection and the protection will smother it; and when the protection goes, the house goes, too. And so, when the State went, the body and soul that had been chained to it collapsed and the moral conscience, no longer owing allegiance to anything or anyone, ceased to exist. This is the triumph of evil. The German had been taught to believe in the 'commandment of the blood', in the mystic music of ancient Germany; and now that the myth has been shattered, the blood has died and the music stopped. Life is a circle; all things return to nature. But sometimes the ashes gave birth to a new life and sometimes they are scattered in the wind without a trace. Sometimes the dead rise to rebuild, sometimes they rise to destroy. But the dead always remain because they are dead and therefore eternal. The world does not die with them. The world continues and the world must find an answer to the dead, and to dead ideas.

Germany today lives as if in a void, perhaps the most complete and utter void which a nation has ever experienced. Yesterday's values—and they were not devoid of spiritual strength and physical means—have been swept aside. But yesterday's values had been implanted to the exclusion of all other values so that no other morality could co-exist with them. And no new values, therefore, can exist today. The whole of Germany resembles a mad vacuum with conflicting views and different theories, good intentions and bad applications, and the German mind, in consequence, does not know where to turn, what to believe or what to do.

But one conclusion can be stated definitely: nothing new, nothing healthy or important in regard to the future is likely to come from inside Germany. It is a country that has been used up, sucked dry and left bloodless. The German mind is shattered. Even literature, or the arts generally, which often flourish in an atmosphere of defeat because they refuse to admit defeat, are silent. In sharp contrast to the period following the first world war, the artistic output, more than a year after the surrender, shows a complete absence of any freshness of style, thought or content; and hardly a sign of any new talent emerging. This is a symptomatic reflection of conditions in present-day Germany.

Nothing will come from that country. Something, therefore, will have to be given to that country. For this is one world and it cannot be divided again into have and have-not nations. It is clear that something new and healthy must arise in Germany

so that not only the Germans but all people everywhere can face the future with confidence. And if this something new and healthy cannot come from within, it must come from without.

The source of the illness of the German mind is clearly traceable. Gertrude Stein in Paris, before I went into Germany, anticipated my diagnosis. 'What the Germans must learn', she told me in her wonderfully deep, half-self-satisfied, half-dead-serious voice, 'is disobedience'. This is the German's high malady.

The inability or unwillingness to possess one's own convictions and to defend them, the refusal to be guided by one's own conscience, is a mark of the abdication of man. It is the victory of evil over man. It shows that he is not free to choose, but afraid to make decisions and to take their consequences. It means ultimately that he is afraid to assume responsibility. This was the point to which Hitler wanted to lead the Germans. And they went with him. By the time he had reached the envisaged end, they had forgotten the meaning of responsibility. We, on the other hand, came to Germany to restore that meaning again. Or if we did not come for that reason, what was the reason for our coming at all?

This is *our* responsibility. It is tragic, maybe, but it is inevitable. And in the degree to which we shall be able to fulfil our task lies the fulfilment of our victory. It alone could enrich it or nullify it. It can glorify it or degrade it. It is our decision, and it is a decision from which we cannot escape.

No doubt this added responsibility is a terrible reflection on war in general. It seems to imply that all wars are meaningless and upset all values. The defeated no longer lose; they remain where they are, on the ground. The victors, on the other hand, stand to lose a great deal in having to care for the defeated.

But in this obligation alone does the conqueror discharge his duty towards himself and to the world *through the defeated*. Like the dead, the defeated establish the relationship of man to man. The only lasting victory rests in the recognition of the equality of all men in the face of God (to whom Man is neither object nor subject but potential equal). Victory lies in the resurrection of the dead and the transfiguration of the defeated. Victory is the recognition of the dignity of Man and of his majesty in his creative independence.

Defeated and victors alike fought for an ideal. The defeated, I believe, fought for a wrong ideal because they tried to perpetuate the clay figure of the State which symbolizes the death of the living human mind. But the victors fought for a futile ideal if they did not smash the clay figure and revive the living mind. If instead of equality there should arise another inequality; if instead of Man, another abstract conception is to rule his life; if instead of assuming responsibility, responsibility is shirked again and transferred to an invisible power—to the telephone or the teleprinter, for instance—then victory can be nothing but a terrible mockery of good.

Military victory in itself provides nothing but a starting point. Often not even that. In the last resort it represents only superior firing power. It tears open wider wounds and inflicts pain on a greater scale. Military victory sunders man apart. True victory heals.

‘The mere conquest of our enemies’, wrote President Roosevelt, in his last, undelivered speech, ‘is not enough. We must go on to do all in our power to conquer the doubts and the fears, the ignorance and the greed, which made this horror possible.’

This means that we must assume responsibility for the guilt of the world and the guilt of omission.

SOME PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Above all things the Germans need food and hope. No man can live without either. But this simple conclusion, though it has been understood by all the four occupying powers, has so far been translated into action only by the Russians. Theirs is a subtle and determined policy which is not devoid of immediate benefits to the Germans but which none the less contains a dangerous undercurrent which remains skilfully covered up. For the Russians do not use the food they give to the Germans as a means to restore their shattered minds; like the Grand Inquisitor rather they use it to make them completely dependent on their benefactor, and the hope which is contained in their charity does not aim at a regeneration of Germany in a reviving concert of Europe; on the contrary, it aims at the submission of Germany to Russian tutelage and cares little about the revival of the world as a whole. For the Russian policy is essentially not a European one. It is bent exclusively on securing certain political

and national ends of her own, and these are bought with gifts of bread. But the hope which this policy spreads is a delusion, for the healing of the universal wound is not taken into consideration at all. The spectre of common spiritual morass and continued physical misery is not banished but rather heightened once the artificial screen of the ideological fog is removed.

The only hope for the world lies in a policy which aims at a European solution of the problem and which admits the utter indivisibility of the peace of the world; which is divorced from ulterior national or personal motives and which, therefore, gives man the bread which is his due without robbing him of his conscience. For in the long run no man will tolerate being treated as a slave and no nation will acquiesce for ever in the whip of a foreign ruler.

The policy of the Western powers has been on the whole—however varying in degrees—animated by fairness and a belief in the necessity of non-intervention. But such an attitude loses all proportion when confronted with a policy of open intervention. It riddles its own attitude with indecision and uncertainty and merely succeeds in giving a coherent pattern to the opposite policy which, in fact, is thus helped indirectly to attain an importance and exclusiveness which it failed to attain by virtue of its own power. This discrepancy does exist today and no polite silence will smooth it out; on the contrary, the silence itself is in danger of being smothered; and yet the Western powers, and particularly Great Britain, seem as if paralysed by fear of having to face this dilemma and of being drawn into a struggle at the centre of which are the traditions of Western culture, and, more immediately, the meaning of the war which has just ended.

All the same, the inescapable fact remains that only a conception of democracy as practised in the West could provide a possible counterpart to the Eastern philosophy of subjugation; its influence alone could provide real hope for the people of Germany because it is aimed at the good of Europe as a whole provided it is aimed, at the same time, at the freeing of man from the bondage in which he has been kept by one regime and in which another regime now threatens to keep him.

A passive, undecided policy that shrinks from decisions and the risk which their logical applications may produce, consigns

itself to failure. The decline of the Western powers, if it does come about, will be due entirely to their inability to preserve those values in defence of which they entered the war. But to prevent their motive from losing its meaning they will have to abandon the policy of non-intervention and indifference which combine to create a policy of incompetence, and to become active and animating, and determined to effect necessary changes.

In the economic field the most important reform is the abolition of the zonal restrictions, at least in the three Western zones of Germany, so as to restore an equitable distribution of goods, a regular flow of raw materials, and to revive the life-blood of a nation instead of lowering its standard of living, which is bound to result in a lowering of the standard of living for the whole of Europe. Certain land reforms must be carried through in the West if only to solve the problem of feeding the millions of refugees which have been crammed into a much reduced space. A capital levy must distribute equally the burden of defeat and stop the trend towards an otherwise inevitable inflation; and the Germans must be given, as a token of our sincerity, an ever-increasing measure of self-government and the right to self-determination under Allied supervision.

This, however, will first of all require agreement among the Western Allies as to the policy of economic, spiritual and social reconstruction to be pursued. It will mean that an answer must be found to the French fear of a revival of the potential war-resources of the Ruhr without at the same time crippling the productive capacity of Western Germany. Germany is still a rich land and her people are an industrious nation. Her contribution to the reconstruction of Europe will form an essential part of the work. Britain needs German coal and steel as much as, if not more than, Germany herself; even Russia needs steel from the Ruhr to produce her own machinery. An internationalized Ruhr, therefore, while remaining part of Germany, could become a centre of production for the common use of all Europe and Russia should not be excluded from its share in its output. This, in turn, means that the economic programme which England is putting into effect in her own country, must be introduced even more quickly in Germany so as to banish the ghost of mass-starvation and mass-unemployment and all the inevitable accompaniments of such a catastrophe.

But the complete process of reconstruction is more than food, clothing and shelter; it entails much more than restarting industries, operating public utility services, co-ordinating agriculture or extracting reparations. The victors must offer the victims the chance to redeem themselves, but to give them material values without offering them moral values is worthless. It is not enough to put the Germans on their feet. *The most important task is to teach them not to bow.*

At Nuremberg the first attempt was made to re-establish international morality over and above the political expediency which Hitler's philosophy had abolished so successfully; it was staged as a reminder that international right was not dead and could still be used as an instrument against international lawbreakers. But in its educational role the Trial failed conspicuously. It was an utter failure in the schools where it had been introduced as a special subject; and it failed to rouse the interest of the German people at large. Only at one stage, when Goering was in the witness box, did they take notice of the Trial. They did not believe in it because the verdict, in their mind, was a foregone conclusion with the victors, in the disguise of judges, sitting in judgement over the vanquished. But Goering's performance roused them, for once, because, for the first time, one of the accused had, so they believed, the courage to stand up to his accusers. The fact that the most important aspect of the Trial was precisely this element of freedom which permitted a man, and above all an accused man, to defend himself with impunity, and that this conception of accepted international morality and decency had been restored to the Germans, this utterly failed to penetrate beyond the precincts of the Court House. It was not the Court's fault. What was at fault was the machinery to *explain* to the Germans the real meaning of the coming of the Allies, particularly of the Western Allies.

The Russians have that machinery. They were the first to produce newspapers, the first to cause volumes of books to be published in Germany, to revive the film world, to reopen the radio net-work, to issue textbooks for schools, and devise a definite plan for the teaching of history, which is the most important aspect of the education of the young. They brought the Cultural League into being, placed a Communist poet who had spent his exile in Moscow, in the position of its chairman;

they encouraged the publication of literary, or pseudo-literary magazines and periodicals, gave Communist authors every facility to publish their works, and opened up the vast resources of Russian scientific, cultural and political publications to the German public through radio, Press, magazines and books. The artistic value of these resources, especially in the literary field, is not a matter for discussion here. The fact remains that the dry, socialist realism which was imported has served the Russian purpose admirably. It was in keeping with its utilitarian view of life and the drabness was part of the political necessity. The newspapers were meant as nothing but propaganda sheets, but once the opposition has been effectively eliminated even the worst propaganda loses its sting since there are no means to compare it with other values which, for all that the person subjected to it knows, may be even worse.

But in the West this machinery to explain the new conception of life was not only bad but almost non-existent, and it was particularly incompetent in the British zone. (The French, it is true, take still less part in the revival of German life.) The German newspapers in the British zone were the dullest, most uninspiring information sheets imaginable, while the official British papers prided themselves on their objectivity and impartiality. But they were neither objective nor impartial but merely poor and uninspired. That it is possible to make a paper lively, stimulating and instructive without at the same time becoming dogmatic and sectarian, was well illustrated by the Americans, who produced in their zone not only the best-run German papers, but whose official newspaper was to become the most important one in Germany, reaching across the borders of the American zone and attaining within a year a circulation of over two and a half million. And the secret of their success lay not in propaganda or one-sided objectivity but in an all-sided objectivity, in a free play for discussion and criticism, and in the presentation of the same problem from both their own and the German point of view.

The British authorities lag far behind the Russians and the Americans. Yet with their high prestige which they are still enjoying in Germany due to their administrative fairness (but which is steadily declining since it has little more to offer than negative virtues) the British administration could have given

the empty German mind the very food for spiritual revival which it needed. If they had better newspapers; if they had brought out good English books in translation; if they had produced good English plays before English audiences, and encouraged the revival of the arts and literature in Germany generally, then the German mind would have had something to think about again and a vacuum would have been filled with the only possible value which can hold out any hope for the future.

For twelve years the German mind was cut off from the Western world and till this day this link has not been restored. This is the important thing to realize. There are currents of faith in this country which could still restore the German's faith in democracy; the Germans are starved for books from, and news about, England and America. The Americans have opened libraries and already published a certain amount of American books and licensed the production of American plays; their illustrated weekly published in Munich is the best of its kind in the whole of Germany; so is the American-licensed youth paper in Berlin; and the literary review appearing in Heidelberg is the only important literary publication in Germany today. But the one spiritual link with England which I found in Germany was in a small university town. It was in the form of a photostat copy of a pamphlet by Victor Gollancz, 'What Buchenwald Means to Us'. It circulated from hand to hand like a forbidden fruit because of its rarity. It was like a gleam of sanity in the midst of a conspiracy of silence.

Why this secrecy, this rarity, when this Western conception and willingness to let live is the only alternative to the narrowness of an enslaving ideology? Of course, the explanation given to me many times by officials in Germany is the inevitable answer, 'We haven't got enough paper. Sixty-five per cent is in the Russian zone, fifteen per cent in the American, ten per cent in the French and only ten per cent in the British zone.' The figures are always correct. But the distribution of food presents a similar problem and yet the Western powers have realized that food must be imported because a man cannot live without it. But food of the mind is as important, for it alone gives a constructive, purposive direction to the life of a man. And quite apart from this, more paper mills could be opened in Germany if there was

the will; and in any case it requires no paper to put on plays or to disseminate culture by means of lectures.

The essential task is still to spread the Western traditions in Germany. English teachers with a knowledge of German and German mentality ought to be given facilities to teach for short terms at German schools and universities; all English authorities with the two essential qualifications, that of interest and a knowledge of the language, should be allowed to go to that country to help for brief periods in their respective fields; British newspapers and magazines should be made available to the Germans by means of link-up and interchange (even though it would be very one-sided for the time being); special editions of English books in German should be prepared and the currency difficulties overcome; the newspapers should revive interest in controversy and free thinking. But officials should not be put in their charge. The official mind can only kill the free mind.

The Western approach to the problem *can* provide the answer to the dilemma in Germany. It may not be perfect in itself, but it does contain in its conception those elements which the empty German mind needs most: the spirit of tolerance and the respect for the individual person. That is why I believe the occupation will have to be long, for it takes time for the spirit of tolerance and respect to strike roots. But an occupation need not be degrading; it could be uplifting. If the elements of self-respect and independence are encouraged and trusted increasingly, the spiritual chaos and impotence, which would inevitably be followed by economic anarchy and some form of dictatorship, could still be avoided and Man could still be redeemed. By delegating responsibility the Western powers could still discharge their own responsibility and free themselves from the guilt of omission.

EARNÁN O. MALLEY

LOUIS LE BROCQUY

LOUIS LE BROCQUY, who is now twenty-nine, has had no formal Art School training, nor had he, until he was twenty years of age, more than an intelligent interest in painting. One day, when studying reproductions of Rembrandt and of Manet, he suddenly realized that painting was a vital process and that it concerned himself. It was as if a door to a hidden world had been suddenly swung open: what had formerly been latent meaning and a pleasant preoccupation now became understanding combined with feeling and imaginative perception. This sudden flash of illumination decided his direction, and from that day onwards he became in essence a painter.

Le Brocquy's earlier work shows the influence of Manet, Velasquez, and Goya; then came an interest in Dégas, Whistler, and in a use of Oriental line. The ever-present danger of preoccupation with the incidentals of representing reality made him seek other methods. Jack Yeats helped him by his imaginative conception, symbolic interpretation, and by the sheer poetic implication of his paint. Through simplification Le Brocquy learned economy of means and the use of suggestion. His handling of broader masses was replaced by an interest in planes. His colour became more subdued as a study of form led to a new sense of its organization and a different feeling for line.

During the war, Ireland, cut off from outside activity, was driven back to her sea boundary. Economically the country had to become self-supporting and in this attempt a new strength and assurance were created, reflected by an added interest in painting and in music. For painters, this shutting away of the outside world tended to dim foreign impact. For years there had been the abstract influence of Gleize and Lhote at work through their pupils, as well as an understanding of present-day European painters. As nineteenth-century and contemporary work is very poorly represented in Irish galleries, students have had to depend on visits to Europe for analysis, understanding and stimulation. The need for the steady influence of good examples of creative work, which can meet prejudice or change it to acceptance or understanding, was most

felt during the war. Indeed, until generosity enriches this deeply felt want, people and painters here will remain isolated from first-class minds expressing contemporary ideas in terms of paint. But one result of this withdrawal was that artists had more time to assess themselves and to develop their own personal contribution. Some, for the first time, discovered the influences and creative possibilities of their own landscape; Le Brocquy was amongst these.

Irish landscape reflects the remoteness of this country from the industrial revolution. In this it echoes an attitude of the Irish mind, which has also been separated from Roman centralization, and somewhat from the Renaissance and the result of the Reformation. There is a dual quality in the landscape which can induce a merging or a withdrawal. From one aspect results an aloof, impersonal sense of remoteness or of hostility to Man, in which hills tower in imaginative height over small holdings and well-divided fields. At times it seems an undiscovered land which Man has yet to explore. With such an aspect there can be no sentimentality, and as a result there is no sentimental attachment. Again, there is a feeling in which Man and his work merge slowly and unobtrusively with the land. Houses sink into or join on with a slope or foreground; men fuse with the walls they sit on, or lean against. Sometimes people and landscape are one, and take on a consciousness of organized growth; a painter cannot separate them as independent in meaning. The people have been intimately bound to this land in love and in war; they have been brought close to it in affection and in physical conflict with it. They feel this relationship passionately, and they are as aware of the land as the land is aware of them.

Louis Le Brocquy wandered through Connemara, a gaunt, ragged district of mountain form, freckled lakes, broken bouldered slopes bedazzled with light and serrated with an edge of sea. The sense of formal composition and defined pattern met with in French landscape and elsewhere is seldom seen here. Harsh light, which strongly emphasizes form and structure, is absent also. Instead is an untamed country lacking in pattern, whose informality makes it easier for people and their world to dovetail and create a mood, and whose elusive colours merge and orchestrate in atmospheric softness. For Le Brocquy, as for others, the land was an absorbing challenge, which for a time replaced continental

conceptions of paintcraft, and demanded expression in a personal idiom.

'Famine cottages, Connemara,' shows his feeling for this land as an emotional concept of colour and form. White-walled cottages, abandoned in the great famine of 1848, indefinite now in reduced form as hollow wind-worn shells, slowly sink back into the soil from which they have come. Pink hills relieve the contrast of upright house fragments, islands are suggested in indefinite distance, and amber seaweed mist echoes colour and symbolizes the sea edge with the dependence of people on it as an alternative source of livelihood. Shawled women jut out of darker paint passages in the foreground as if they were worn stone shapes. An inverted tarred curragh overhanging a path seems an earth shape of bridge with flowing water, and a muffled green landscape threads in and out through the variegated colour planes of white wall shadows.

In his oils Le Brocquy draws first in charcoal, which is then fixed, and paint is scumbled over the preliminary priming to make it as translucent as possible. He feels his way in colour, which is put on in transparent layers and emphasized by brush stroke or finger rubbing. The thin layers are a reaction to his former thicker use of the medium, and an attempt to break down the opacity of oil. He draws his brush sideways or across to fleck paint on the surface as an aid in creating textural richness. The transparent priming achieves the same effect as gesso, and the scumbling creates a movement in this underlying paint. The total effect is a richly luminous surface, broken up and livened by this method and again helped towards unity by the fusion of these transparent areas. Every part of the composition now functions equally.

From 1942 Le Brocquy experimented with form and avoided emphatic colour. In his series of 'Classic Themes' he uses the human bodies purely as an exercise in form in an architectural way. Legs become pillars, knees and arms seem to emphasize weight and stress, and the body is distorted as a sense of supporting mass is built up. The colour is confined to sombre green-grey, and the total effect is severely gaunt.

'Condemned Man' is a later work, and in it he shows a desire to get rid of this undue severity. There is now no attempt to show things as what they look like, but a desire to show them as they

are. This oil is a mental as distinct from a visual idea of a gaol, and it has a particular interest in a country where gaol was a natural place in which to meet friends or to say goodbye. Broken inter-related planes, and the precision of all that surrounds the prisoner, make for a feeling of space. Ponderous weight of wall is indicated into which the occupant is dovetailed; behind him a window, normally expected to give light, casts the dark shadow of oppression and hopelessness over part of his face. The prison wall is cut across to show him in stylized impersonal awkwardness as a cipher. The monotony of dull wall is brightened by a blue book held in his hand, and by two small blue-and-white flowers which symbolize beauty, and, viewed in another way, an image of desire, a woman's face. A lantern-eyed cat, the only free being in the gaol, prowls beyond an iron door which leads to further cells, but yet moves carefully. High up, silhouetted against light beyond the envelopment of wall, is a small beckoning figure, the sense of freedom.

In 1945 Le Brocquy, whilst in the midlands near Tullamore, became interested in tinkers, who are peculiar to this country, and in no way related to gipsies. They may have in them a basis of the wandering scholar and craftsman, and their language, the Shelta, has a word use of Irish, but largely they are the once-dispossessed people of confiscations wandering without security of land through the countryside. By trade they are tinsmiths and horse jobbers, beggars in a wheedling, monotonous and patterned chant in towns, but in the country they induce hospitality by the involved drama of their conversational skill. Their doctoring of horses, by which, for a short time during a fair, a broken-winded, limping animal becomes a glistening, high-stepping edition of a bloodhorse, results in enviable or reluctant folklore amongst settled landmen. They are lithe and hardy, sharp in feature, and capable of sudden calls on endurance from their uncertain way of life in a difficult climate. With them primitive emotions are easily aroused and expressed; their women drink and fight as readily as their men, and bear children without halting the day's journey.

Their aloofness, intractability, and fierce independence interested Le Brocquy. They are, he could see, outside of the closely organized life of the parish unit, looked on with mistrust and suspicion, but generally treated with the tolerance given in the

country to groups outside of its parish life. They become a symbol of the individual as opposed to organized, settled society, and to the growing power-control of the State; a symbol, also, of the distressed and dispossessed people of Europe wandering, unlike the tinkers, without hope of changing their condition by individual effort. For the creative worker they could represent the artist who deals in the unexpected and the unrecognized, and who suffuses with meaning familiar things against the inanition of their too facile and unmeaning acceptance.

In Le Brocquy's latest work, against studies of tinkers, he shows them grouped in their family unit enjoying Springtime, watching a sick child, or clustered around a fire.

Le Brocquy's notebook supplies him with quick sketches, which later become watercolours and oils. His indian-ink line from imaginative memory is backed by scumbled wax on which he creates movement, as if the line floated with independent existence in front of its background. The line may change in process as the mood dictates, but it must always be consciously felt as it gropes its way. There is a danger in such use of line. It may lose its first deeply felt impression or, by simplification and distortion in the service of design, it may become mentally laboured. Used in oil, this line may by emphasis detract from apparent simplicity.

In his watercolours, as in the manner of Henry Moore, he rubs wax over colour, then adds another colour layer. Each tone now, as well as fusing visually, keeps its own identity. This creates a superimposed movement within a small area, and adds to the total impression of vitality. Monotonous surface is broken up, and colour subtlety is increased. By these means the artist aims at a strength of texture which he opposes in counterpoint to what might otherwise become a hard isolation of line.

The oil, 'Making the Twig Sign', is pervaded by a sense of ritual and mystery. The moon, a symbol of wonder, intuition and the unknown, floods soft green light over the head and back of the standing tinker and across the country in the background. A tinker bends forward on his knees completely absorbed in his almost sacerdotal task of holding two sticks which he crosses on the ground. Opposite to him a kneeling woman with flaming wind-careless hair, holding a similar stick in hand, is ecstatically withdrawn by the ceremony. Her light blouse and patch-coloured dress oppose the darkly luminous tones of the men's clothes. A

child, uniting kneeling man and woman, watches eagerly, whilst on the right a lean-jawed woman, isolated by treatment of strong light which surrounds her, lifts her face in apprehension. Along the mountain side the figure of a woman rests as if tradition, watching and guiding in a spirit of reverie, were present. Diverging paths lead up to houses, in front of which is a lyrical mood of tender green landscape, a contrast in settled possession and quiet beauty to this isolated, stark intensity, of inherited mystery.

RAYMOND MORTIMER

BACK TO ITALY AND GREECE

NAPLES

Ecco Roma!, all the old travellers tell us, 'was the coachman's cry, and he pointed his whip across the sea-green Campagna to where at last the sail of St. Peter's broke the horizon. From the heavens St. Peter's is invisible. Through the port window of the Dakota I saw the Tiber, the rash of new suburbs, the Vittorio Emmanuele wedding-cake, but I could not detect the Dome. Alas that to a god's-eye view the earth should be so dull, mostly a 'modernistic' pattern in 'art-shades' of mauve and pale green, stained at intervals with what looks like a spreading fungus—trees. Make the journey south by rail or road, and there is a sequence of excitements: the flattening roofs, the first vineyard, the first cypress hedge, the first olives. The only change you notice from the air is that a village is now a huddle not of pink but of fawn. After crossing the Channel I could recognize nothing in the France I knew till suddenly the Pont du Gard, Uzès and the Rhône. An hour for luncheon at Istres, near Marseilles, then St-Raphael (with Cannes quite close to it, the Esterel a mere hump), Corsica to starboard, then over the Elba coast—beautiful this, the shallow water inlaying a turquoise band between the grey of land and the peacock of the sea. Breakfast near Camberley, and dinner at Posilipo: to those of us who grew up before the

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age of air-travel such translations remain astonishing; and to me they are also repugnant. I fail to readjust either mind or body; I remain in an incredulous daze.

And then the delays of air-travel, the uncertainties. I had to be in the Transport Command office in St. James's Street at 3.30 on the afternoon before the flight. The usual weighings and fillings in of forms. 'Religion? Next of kin?' (Reasonable? Yes, of course. The wonder is that they don't go on to ask whether you wish to be buried or cremated.) Then by motor-coach to Black Bushe in that awful military part of Surrey, to dine and sleep in the Transit hotel, a glory of stockbroker's Tudor. We were to take off at 7 a.m., and it was certainly better to sleep on the spot, though it meant sharing a room with four others. But why drag us down there so early? Why not let us dine in London? In the Services time is of no value.

I went to bed very early, only to be told an hour later that after all I should not be leaving tomorrow: there were medical stores with a Priority One. Delightful prospect of a whole day, perhaps two, in this home from home. An hour later 'You will go after all'. Everyone very polite, the bar excellent, a charming Waaf officer to brief us. But no company without a monopoly could thus waste our time and ransack our nerves. At breakfast I noticed emblazoned on the wall the motto of Transport Command: *Ferio ferendo*. They have innocently taken this over from Bomber Command, and they live up to it: 'I wound by carrying'.

The requisitioned Hotel Patria in Naples combines the night-noises and squalor of Southern Italy with the gastronomic refinements of Huddersfield. What more apt to this blazing April than steak and kidney pudding out of a tin? I never liked Naples; bombing has done less damage than I expected, but has made the place more untidily Levantine than ever, and the demoralization is extravagant. The children organized for thieving: if a lorry stops for an instant in the street a suckling with a razor slashes the tarpaulin and chucks its contents to his pretty playmates.

Yet, as I stroll about Naples, happiness seeps into me, permeates me, lifts me to rapture. The mule-carts with their painted saints and bouquets, the pink buildings with grey pilasters topped by gesticulating or swooning statuary, the flower-stalls, Capri on the horizon, Vesuvius (though his profile was spoiled by the last eruption), and last night dinner 'au Pausilippe altier, de mille

feux brillant'—this is not a delirium, I am back again in Italy, in Italy, in Italy.

ROME

I came up in a lorry by the coast road: Formia, Itri, Terracina, the most demolished places I have seen, and people living troglodytic in the ruins. The crude irony of a Fascist exhortation painted on the one wall still standing of a house in Formia: *Vincere*. Soon after Albano my driver, bless his heart, made the classic gesture, though with a whipless hand, *Ecco Roma!*; and there was the bellying sail. Across the suburbanized Campagna, a glimpse of St. John Lateran, the Colosseum, the Corso, and I was in the spectacular courtyard of the Borghese palace, looking through the open double colonnade to fountains ebullient among statues under cascading roses.

Dazed by noise, traffic, and the fabulous display of goods in the shop-windows: cheeses, leather, Swiss watches, glass, china, typewriters, German cameras, and silk, real silk, whole décors of silk. Rome to the outward eye is unchanged by the war. The men, as always, well dressed—none of the shapeless *ersatz* cloth one sees in Paris. The children innumerable and exuberant. But how Rome has changed since first I knew it! No other city has in my lifetime been so deliberately spoiled by its rulers. Not one of Mussolini's improvements is anything but a calamity. The approach to St. Peter's is monstrous; so to my taste is the *Via del Impero*: Trajan's Forum has lost not only its cats but most of its charm. But worst of all are the quarters beyond the Colosseum—the Caelian and Aventine. Here there used to be alluring lanes between walled vineyards and kitchen-gardens: the country stretched its fingers right into Rome. Now I can find this once characteristic rusticity only in one little corner, the space in front of Santi Giovanni e Paolo.

Mussolini, I am told, was intent upon driving a new grand thoroughfare from the Corso to the Pantheon, which would have abolished the Piazza Sant' Ignazio, a square unique in the complicated elegance of its plan, which gives it the air of a setting for *opéra-bouffe* or Goldoni. The saving of this least spoiled region of Rome is some consolation for the destruction of Santa Chiara, the Eremitani, the Campo Santo at Pisa and the Genoese palaces.

My first two days in Rome have been given to the churches.

Oddly the building that has most instantly bowled me over is none of my old favourites, Santa Maria in Cosmedin or Sant' Andrea al Quirinale or San Marco, beautiful as these are; it is San Stefano Rotondo: not its ingenuous frescoes of ingenious tortures (Belsen has made these babyish), but its circle of pillars and pale wooden roof. One of the joys of revisiting, as of re-reading, is that at every age one is caught by different excellences. Rome and Toledo and Aix-en-Provence, like *Madame Bovary*, *War and Peace*, and *A la recherche du temps perdu*, offer, each seven years in one's life, beauties and truths previously unremarked or unacceptable.

NAPLES AGAIN

Having to go back for one night to Naples to lecture, I remembered the ancient rite, and on my way home after dinner went to the Trevi fountain. There are no coins in Italy, luckily I had some English pennies. Like almost all the fountains, except those in front of St. Peter's, the Trevi has only a trickle dripping from its jets. After dark Rome recovers much of its old sublimity, and in the Piazza Navona you can fancy the ghosts of the old coaches splashing over the flooded paving beneath the gesticulating Danube and Nile with his averted head.

I took the other road south, through Cassino, which is unbelievable in its ruin. You would not know it had been a town; it suggests a congregation of gigantic stalagmites or a landscape on the moon. Visiting in Naples the ruins of Santa Chiara I found the cloister, with its landscapes painted on tiles, mercifully intact. I went also to the aquarium. A poor display of fish, but it was the Marees frescoes I was after. Though one has an interesting composition, all are feeble. How childish and chauvinistic of the Weimar Germans to compare Marees with Cézanne!

ROME AGAIN

Four lectures on successive afternoons, and a number of parties to meet very interesting and agreeable people. In the mornings further revisitings. I had not seen the new Vatican picture-gallery: it has a staircase of marble and bronze quite worthy of a Lyons Corner House. And one has to go right round the outside of the Vatican City to reach it. The road behind St. Peter's, from which alone you can see the full sublimity of the architecture, has

been closed by His Holiness. There is an old Italian rhyme about blood flowing when Cesare and Pietro are in agreement, and certainly they did agree in disfiguring Rome with a fine disregard for expense.

The Vatican museum is the most exhausting in the world. The spirit flags, so do the feet. In the palace of Caserta, so I am told, which is Allied Headquarters, a recent visitor was puzzled by patches of oil in the corridors of the *piano nobile*: our allies, who do not care for walking, had used a crane to lift into the palace a jeep, in which they journeyed from office to office. I don't know what King Bomba used there, but the Popes have their gestatorial chair. And they need it, here in the Vatican: thousands upon thousands of specimens of antique sculpture, most of them worthless. Why did anyone ever like such wretched stuff? Every time I come home to the Borghese Palace I gaze astonished at the colossal antique statues in the courtyard. No Royal Academician could make anything clumsier. And when the Borgheses bought these, there were a hundred sculptors in Rome who could do a hundred times better—and doubtless cheaper also. 'Strange how the mind can be more powerful than the eye!' I said to R. H. 'Just superstition,' he answered. Yes, and this was a superstition that Michelangelo and all the greatest Renaissance artists swallowed with enthusiasm.

I watched in the Vatican a cohort of Polish soldiers being shown around. The guide was expatiating on the nineteenth-century pictures, some of the largest and vilest works ever perpetrated. But then the masterpieces in the Vatican are not only the noblest pictures in the world, they are the most unapproachable. Reynolds admitted that at first sight the Raphael *Stanze* meant little even to his trained eye. To an untrained eye they must be inexpressibly tedious. And the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel is teasing for merely physical reasons. Perhaps after all the poor Poles were lucky in their cicerone. But the Raphaels are even more impressive, spacious, and serenely overwhelming than I remembered.

All the Italian churches have a notice: 'Let no woman dare to enter without stockings'. And they don't dare. (If such a veto were imposed in France, there would be few women in church, for where would they get the stockings?) Also, small children must not enter the sacred edifice unless their breeches reach

below their knees. Yet the ceiling of Sant' Ignazio, painted by a Jesuit and at a time when the austerity of the Counter-Reformation was at its peak, displays a colossal woman with naked breasts.

ATHENS

Having moved to the transit hotel in Rome for the night before flying, I was told there would be no place for me on the Athens aircraft. Two hours later, a place was found. (I had a high priority, but this would have been neglected if I had not also had a friend in the Air Force.) The flight was dull, most of the time enveloped as it were in cotton wool. Having previously always approached Greece by the slowest (and pleasantest) method, a ship, I now saw the Forum after breakfast and the Parthenon before tea.

In Athens as in Rome I look vainly for any sign of under-nourishment. There is much tuberculosis, I am told, among the children, but those one sees are muscular and turbulent bronzes. The crowds in the street in Rome and Athens look happier and healthier than in Paris or London. What is the explanation? First, evidently, the climate. Sun and fresh vegetables all the year round. Secondly, a birth-rate much higher than ours, and a death-rate considerably higher. Only the tough survive. This natural selection makes a very strong race, able to flourish, as they did in the time of Socrates, on bread, cheese, olives and their oil. The victims are the mothers, aged by bearing so many children and looking after them and mourning them. (One wonders, incidentally, whether in these conditions one would oneself have survived.)

I am staying in the old Grande Bretagne, which is requisitioned. One pays two pounds a day, but the food provided makes the dining-room half empty except at breakfast. At school our inadequate meals served a double purpose: they saved the house-master's pocket, and they drove us to the tuckshop, the profits of which paid for the upkeep of the cricket-fields. At the Grande Bretagne the worse the meals, the fewer the people who endeavour to consume them. Who profits from this I have not tried to discover: I presume it is the British taxpayer.

The food in the *tavernas* is excellent: lamb, pork, langouste, and every sort of fish including *calamaio*, a delicacy that combines the consistency of rubber with the taste of ink. I enjoy nothing more than the olives, large and dark purple, especially when there is

ewe-butter, white but delicious, to eat on bread with them. A restaurant at the Piræus, very *bistrot* in its appearance, furnishes prodigious feasts, but I have neither the capacity nor the indecency to eat my way through ten courses. No food-rationing: absence of transport and of civil servants, it is alleged, makes this impracticable. I can hear some self-righteous Englishman saying 'Let us send nothing to Europe until the rich there are prevented from gorging'. This would mean till the Greek Kalends. For where the poor have never eaten meat except on great occasions, they would always create a black market on which to sell their meat ration. In the north there may be hunger, as there is certainly hideous overcrowding, twenty people sleeping to a room, because the Germans have destroyed the villages. I find it difficult to believe that anyone in Attica starves, but how difficult it is to know! In Italy, for instance, the chief sufferers are people with a small fixed income, professors, civil servants, judges, retired ambassadors, generals' widows, the usual victims of inflation. They have lived on selling their furniture, books, clothes. Now they starve—but invisibly. This is a distress no casual visitor can notice. Here in Greece the inflation has been even more marked and, of course, the intellectual classes are the victims. Prices in Athens, except for cigarettes and sponges, are higher than in Italy or France. The economic situation is said to be desperate. And already the Greeks have suffered more than any other people, except perhaps the Poles: they have had war, occupation, a devastating famine, and a civil war.

I feared I might find the English unpopular, but in fact this is the pleasantest of all countries to be English in. The old friendship for England is stronger than ever, and in all classes. The Greeks have not forgotten the British army that came in 1941 to their help. This was in vain, or rather it helped only the Russians, but when the troops left, the Greeks covered them with flowers.

Some of the accounts of the Greek political situation that I have read in respectable English papers set me wondering about their authors. One doesn't expect people to be objective; if they try to be objective, they are already exceptional. But what disconcerts me is that so many writers make no effort even to *appear* objective.

Some of these are idealists unaware of their bias. They assume innocently and believe honestly that in every country the

majority of people are 'Left'. They don't notice that even in this country the Labour Party have never yet obtained a majority of the votes recorded; and they go so far as to persuade themselves that most Germans were anti-Nazi. When, therefore, the electorate in a country like Greece swings to the Right, they 'know' there must be some deception. The voters have been intimidated or the returns falsified. These idealists will reject all the evidence: they can't bear the truth, so they won't believe it. And they genuinely don't.

But there are also political writers of quite a different order. These simply are not interested in the truth; indeed, they don't believe there is any such thing. The Nazis, for instance, were candid pragmatists; and I think that modern Communists are in this respect followers not of Karl Marx but of William James. The dear, good Bostonian, cannot, of course, be held responsible: he merely systematized notions that were in the air, never dreaming that he was preparing blue-prints for the mass-production of falsehood. And in any case I doubt whether anyone in the Kremlin has heard of him.

I am amazed at the assurance with which after a week or so in Greece members of parliament and my fellow journalists return to expound the situation. I have read just enough modern Greek history to know how complicated their politics always are. Personalities count for more than programmes. And the abstention recommended by the Communists is an old custom of Greek parties that know they are unpopular. It enables them to claim as their supporters all who do not vote because they are absent from home (like almost all soldiers), or busy, or uninterested or ill or even dead.

Let me, without too much assurance, sum up the impressions I received. Both sets of partisans in Greece fought the Germans a little, and fought each other a lot. Both were intent on seizing power. The Communists attempted their *coup d'état* and in the process killed thousands of working class hostages (the rich were almost all in a safe quarter). Result, a general revulsion that has placed the Populists in power. At least equally important is nationalist fervour; the Greeks detest the Bulgarians, fear the Yugoslavs, and regard the Russians much as the Czechs regarded the Germans. Anti-Slav feeling is nothing new here. The consequence of all this is a Government much further to the Right than suits English

tastes or the wishes of our Government. It reflects little except the general wish for the Monarchy and fear of the Communists. It is doubtful, therefore, how long it will remain popular in Greece. My conclusion is that we should use all possible pressure to force moderation upon the Populists. Though they are not the Party we backed, we shall, most unfairly, be held responsible—except in Greece itself—for any follies they commit. I suspect that four out of five Greeks long for our Army to remain. If it leaves, they fear that Tito will march in at the invitation of the Communist minority (cf. the Sudeten Germans). And then Greece, they think, may become another Spain, with a civil war kept alive by foreign help to both sides. I wonder whether those who disagree with this summary analysis will dismiss me as honestly self-deceived or as deliberately unobjective.

The obsession of the Greeks with politics is as old as Aristophanes. It consumes their energy like heroin or hashish. But then, how they enjoy it!

While not comparable with the *Semana santa* in Seville, the Athenian Easter is celebrated with pomps that are most beautiful and moving. After dark on 'Great Friday', as they call it, there is a procession from the Cathedral through the principal streets. Pavements and balconies and housetops are crowded with Athenians all carrying lighted candles, which look the prettier because the street lamps are shrouded in black. Complete silence obtains in the usually so loquacious crowd during the passing of the procession, which advances at a slow march and which is so long that it includes three bands at intervals playing the Chopin Funeral March. Every important body in the city is included from the entire Cabinet to the firemen; the kilted Evzones do not so much march as slide their feet slowly along the ground with measured hesitation; then girls carrying hooped garlands above their heads; boys with baskets of flowers, and, at last, accompanied by the sumptuous clergy, the bier and canopy figuring the corpse of Christ. But this is a mourning for Adonis, complete with canephores and stephanophores.

At midnight on the Saturday, from every church the priest emerges after Mass to read the Easter Gospel to the multitudes that have not found a place inside. Already we have lighted our candles from a consecrated flame that has been brought out, and now 'Christ is risen' we cry, and answer 'Indeed He is risen':

rockets fizz from the roofs, fire-crackers jump among us, the bells are ringing helter-skelter. How spectacular the slow flowing away of the crowd, everyone putting his hand to his candle to shelter it from the breeze so that he may light from it at home the lamp below the ikon. Each dark street is lively with faces thus illuminated, groups dissipating into twos and threes, who pause sometimes because a flame that has expired must be relit from the candle of a friend.

Especially frequented for this ceremony is the little church on the summit of Lykabettos. This conical mountain looks as if it has been miraculously transported from the volcanic region round Le Puy. Even more conspicuous than the Acropolis, why is it hardly mentioned in the literature of ancient Greece? One may conjecture that its oddity offended Attic taste: a poet passes in silence the cast in his mistress's eye. There was a special word in ancient Greek meaning 'to escape notice' when doing something. This may be thought to suggest furtiveness or else 'turning a blind eye' as a national characteristic. (Does the existence of a dual 'number', intermediary between singular and plural, similarly denote a taste for intimacy?)

In the dark small hours of Easter Day Lykabettos itself did escape notice, and we saw in its place a series of zig-zags in the sky with lights flickering down them—a Jacob's Ladder busy with angels earthward bound. The congregation from the Lykabettos church hurrying home with candles furnished this set-piece. We could hardly tear ourselves from watching it; and when we did it was to gaze in the contrary direction at the Parthenon floodlit. Poised in the sky like a colossal helicopter, it looked more complete as well as much larger than by day.

Followed the ritual feast, with red eggs hard-boiled and a soup made from the lamb's intestines. The Lenten fast is severe, and in Holy Week even Laodiceans abstain from meat and eggs and cheese and fish other than the 'bloodless' crustaceans. So much the more ardent the appetite they bring to the awaited feast. Never have I eaten better meat than my Easter lamb near Phaleron. Roasted whole and very slowly on a spit above charcoal in a garden by the sea, and basted in olive-oil mixed with lemon-juice, it had the consistency of praline.

Religion in modern, as in ancient, Greece is a matter much more of ceremonial pieties than of morality or mysticism. The

parish priests are little educated and carry little weight in politics. (Hence, more's the pity, there is no party analogous with the Christian Democrats in Italy and the M.R.P. in France. And on the other hand there is little anticlerical feeling.) But the clergy were closely associated with the old struggle for national independence and again with the Resistance in this war. The Regent Damaskinos, called by his enemies on the Right a simoniac, is remarkable for stature as well as for character and brain. Before he became a monk he was a champion wrestler. He remains prodigiously potent. He will be extruded but no man seems to have the strength to take his place.

The Acropolis remains the most moving and sublime of sites. How far the effect made by its architecture depends upon associations and position I cannot guess. How delicate the contrast between the warmth of the weathered marbles and the grey coldness, purple-shadowed, of the live rock from which they rise! The Theseum, a temple contemporary with the Parthenon, is insipid: I do not know whether it includes all the subtle curves discovered in the Parthenon. In any case time has radically altered the elevations alike of the Parthenon and the Propylæa. Is then this beauty we worship in them largely a creation of hazard? I do not believe so, nor do I see much good reason for this disbelief.

I went to the Acropolis alone and on foot and towards sunset. Athens, which looked so shoddy and papery to my still Rome-filled eyes, was transfigured by the apricot light. Parnes, Hymettus, Pentelicon, made their noble largo on the horizon. A child was running beside the Erectheum from poppy to poppy collecting a nosegay. A guardian was tearing up grass, I suppose to feed his Easter lamb. A kestrel was taking food to its nestlings in a cranny of the Parthenon architrave. And my *prière sur l'Acropole* was a thanksgiving. Five years previously how could one have expected ever again to know such happiness?

The Italians are civilized but unsophisticated; the Greeks sophisticated but uncivilized. This has as much truth as one should hope for in an epigram. Nowhere else in the world have I been aware of so conspicuous a civility as obtains in Tuscany. Even the defects of the Italians, the realism that deteriorates into cynicism, the scepticism that confines their sense of duty to their immediate family, are signs of an immensely antique society. But, since the Seicento, Italy had led Europe in no domain; and

from a sort of innocent complacency the Italians, conscious heirs to unexampled splendours, take little stock of what has been happening elsewhere. Why should the compatriots of Raphael concern themselves with Cézanne? And, for that matter, having Puccini, what could they learn from Hugo Wolf or Fauré? In each of the large cities there is, of course, a little clan familiar with the culture of the present, but not the mass of educated Romans or Florentines or Milanese. Whether you talk of painting or literature, music or the theatre, this provincialism crops up. (And Croce has, unintentionally, encouraged it. For he has directed attention to Germany instead of to France and England, which in this century have had so much more to offer.) Italy has produced only one great painter since the eighteenth century, Modigliani; and there is not a picture by him in any public gallery in Italy. In this sense the Italians may be called unsophisticated.

Greece might be defined as a Balkan country with a people that retains many characteristics of the Ancient Greeks and with a Parisianized intelligentsia. No aristocracy, no great country houses, no Renaissance or eighteenth century; the only literature or painting that is more than a hundred years old either folk or ecclesiastical. Their past has been denuded by the Turks as their mountains by the goats. In this condition they have naturally looked to France for light. (I think they are now beginning to look to England; and while I believe we should do everything to encourage them, it is essential that any appearance even of rivalry with France should be avoided. I have been careful when lecturing in Athens to proclaim my own debt to the French.)

What makes Greece so endlessly fascinating—apart from the fabulous beauty of the light and the promontories and archipelagoes—is the persistence of ancient Greek characteristics. Reading a book on modern Greek folklore and ancient Greek religion, by J. C. Lawson, a mine of learning, I came on a delicious example. In most places the cult of Demeter has been transferred to St. Demetrios. But at Eleusis the goddess was too powerful, and her statue was worshipped, among the usual ikons, as that of an imaginary St. Demetria. Then, alas, a century or so ago, this marble was bought by some astute bagmen, to the consternation of the Eleusinians, and it now stands in the Fitzwilliam Museum marked 'IVth century, much damaged'.

It is worth while going through the grind of learning classical Greek, if only for the increased richness of response to modern Greece. Incidentally one gets much amusement from current idiom. A fashionable gathering or restaurant is called 'cosmic' (*mondain*), and I was puzzled at seeing a building with large letters announcing it as the ethnic trapeze. After a moment I was much pleased with myself, for I interpreted this, rightly, as National Bank. I long to learn modern Greek, both to talk to the people and to read poets such as Cavafy and Seferis and Elytis. Fortunately the writers all talk good English or French, and those I have met are delightful company, especially Seferis and Katsimboris the critic. (He is the hero of Henry Miller's *Colossus of Maroussi*, which I have not read. Miller, like Hemingway, Faulkner and Sartre, belongs to what Ralph Partridge calls the 'Can you take it' school. I can't. I'm not interested in proving my toughness; indeed, I should be ashamed to be tough. I read in order to enjoy.) Remarkable the liveliness of modern Greek letters, despite the difficulties facing the writers. If two thousand copies of a book are sold, it is a triumph. Also there is still no one accepted language. There are, it seems, three forms of modern Greek, and according to your subject or medium you take your choice or make your own mixture. Yet Athens buzzes with intellectual life. Kazantzaki, Sikilianos, Dimeras, Kanellopoulos, Emberikos, Tsatsos, are among the distinguished figures I have enjoyed talking to; and there is a painter called Tsaroukhis, whose designs for the stage I should like the Vic-Wells company to realize.

I have never yet come across a readable history of ancient Greece, but I fancy that there is no other civilization (though many barbarisms) in which I should so much dislike to live. One spent the summer scrambling up mountain-sides in heavy armour, the winter sitting on juries. But Athens in Roman times must have been highly agreeable, and modern Greece is one of the most inviting countries in the world. Four or five days a week even in winter you can have your luncheon out of doors, I am told. The people are splendidly hospitable. The talk is excellent, there are poets, there are wits, there are charmers. I leave with profound regret. It would be wise to loiter away the summer on an island (better on several islands), wise, but not sensible. How often wisdom and common sense offer opposing counsels. As one grows older, the misery brought by one's

imprudences becomes lost in a haze, and it is only the prudences of which one repents.

This has been one of the happiest fortnights of my life. A dinner with Greek friends at a *taverna* in the Plaka, the old quarter where you still feel traces of Turkey, and catch the characteristic smell of Islam; and the walk afterwards below the Acropolis and back past the peanut stalls, with their acetylene flares under the pepper-trees, while nightingales sang within a few yards of the trams. A luncheon out of doors at Sunium. Another on Salamis, and the cypresses in the whitewashed courtyard of the Phaneromene monastery. A sailors' café in the Piraeus where, one after another, men rose from their tables to perform, alone or hand-in-hand, traditional dances—just for love of dancing, and with how sure a sense of rhythm.

My last day has been spent motoring to a place I did not know, Ægosthena, or Porto Germanos, as it is now called, at the easternmost point of the Gulf of Corinth. The great castle, with its towers and ruined walls, looks as medieval as Chinon or Harlech: it was built in the time of Thucydides. A dozen little houses, one of them a *taverna*, where after a bathe we found eggs and mullet and cheese. They had no bread to spare. I had to hurry back from this elysium to pick up my ticket 'in person' at the Air Transport office in Athens. (Why in person? There was nothing to be done there, no weighing or so forth.) When I arrived, I was told—of course—that after all there would be no place for me in the aircraft. And two hours later a telephone message: there would be a place. The R.A.F. man in charge was perfectly polite and I could not blame him: the office was understaffed. But I earnestly hope that this is the last time I have to commit myself to the feckless tergiversations of Transport Command. How saddening that even a part of the Air Force, with its incomparable record, should thus collapse into an occasion for jeers. No good ever came from setting a Derby winner to haul a wagonette.

ROME AGAIN

At the Athens airport more trouble, this time with the Greeks. Where, the gendarme asked, was my *permis de séjour*? No one had suggested that such an object was necessary. 'If you have not a permit to remain, I fear you cannot leave.' Faced with this *Alice in Wonderland* logic, I bumbled pathetically.

Some signs of melting. Had I a photograph? If so perhaps a permit to remain could be made out on the spot. The best I could produce was a photograph in an Athens evening paper which had an interview with me. It was the Easter number: the front page carried two illustrations, one of me, one of the Saviour; and this very properly turned the scale in my favour. All I had to do was to answer the ritual questions about my religion, my profession and my mother's maiden name.

The forms I have filled in during the last two years on four journeys abroad would add up to a book the length of *Candide*. Who reads this prose? Does the spelling of my maternal grandfather's name provoke fascinating, interminable and increasingly embittered controversies between the archivists of Athens, Lisbon and Tunis? I fear not. I fear that I have written these thousands of words—and all so truthful—utterly in vain. I doubt if they serve even the traditional purpose of wrapping pastries. They accumulate in vast antres, blushing unseen, or, rather, gradually yellowing.

It has come to be believed that, though never read save by their victims, these questionnaires augment the efficacy or at least the grandeur of the numinous state. Hallowed by customary reverence, docketed by sad little officials who are less useful than the most lethargic of monks in the most relaxed of medieval cloisters, these so sedulously filled-in forms reveal in our twentieth century a superstition as base as the respect attached to prayer-wheels in Tibet.

Even from the air the Gulf of Corinth is replete with beauty; there were motionless cloud-shadows on the mountains staining the fawn with patches of indigo; snow on Parnassus; the green river of olive-trees flowing below Delphi; cumulus clouds downy and incandescent just below us. But the windows of the Dakota were opaque with oil and dirt. I understand that to men used to carrying bombs—and at what a risk—we human beings must seem a despicable freight. But it is odd that the R.A.F. should have so little of the naval feeling for the ship-shape, should care not at all for the grooming of Pegasus. During the war it was not so, but then the mechanics were attached to particular crews or craft. The 'pool' system which has been substituted is bound to foster indifference. A wicked capitalist has some interest in stimulating the zeal of his employees. But a Government office?

Monopoly capitalism is indefensible: it falls between every

stool. So nationalization is inescapable. But how to make this efficient? Many men will do their best just for the sake of making a good job. Many, but not, I think, most. If you don't put a carrot in front of a donkey's nose, you must use a stick. If you don't offer profit, can you manage without an Ogpu?

I regard the return of the Labour Government as a crowning mercy: all the more painful therefore the temptations to Cobdenism with which the Air Ministry so persistently assails my virtue.

(To be concluded)

MERVYN JONES-EVANS

HENRY JAMES'S YEAR IN FRANCE

In the autumn of 1875 Henry James, aged thirty-two, arrived in Paris. It was by no means his first visit to Europe, for several years of his childhood and adolescence had been spent outside America, but this was his first visit as a writer. It was to be an important event in his life and he had already a premonition of its value. On previous visits he had only too readily laid himself open to absorb European traditions and culture, so his feeling for the past was well developed. In America there was nothing to assuage his thirst and he hankered after the Europe which he was convinced had more to offer him than Boston or New York. What is more, he had come to the turning point of his life: a decision had to be made and it was one that he could make easily. He knew that there was no alternative, that it was only in literature that he could find any sense of fulfilment, and so, looking for a spring-board from which to take the plunge, he turned towards Europe.

Europe was the centre of intellectual and literary activity, and therefore it was inevitable that sooner or later James must migrate there to free himself from the deadening, cloying, sterile puritanism of New English life. After an uneventful year at Cambridge, Massachusetts, he set out in search of the congenial surroundings he needed and the intellectual company he so ardently desired. He arrived as a self-styled apprentice to sit at the feet of his chosen French masters and to learn from them the true meaning of art

and the intrinsic value of the written word. He wanted to see at first hand how their minds worked and in what direction they were tending. Above all, he wanted to become part of that splendid circle of writers who represented for him the only live force in contemporary literature and the only movement with which he felt any affinity. He was the right age; for ten years already his life had been devoted to the profession of literature and he had to his credit a number of reviews and critical articles, several stories, and one novel, *Roderick Hudson*, which, at the time of his arrival, was being serialized in *The Atlantic Monthly*.

James took rooms at 29 rue de Luxembourg, intending that Paris should become his home. He found his way easily into society for he possessed breeding, culture and a certain amount of wealth. In addition, he spoke impeccable if somewhat old-fashioned French and, most useful of all, he was an American. It was far easier for an American to pass through the barred doors of London or Paris society than it was for a young Englishman or Frenchman. Henry James knew this and took full advantage of his opportunities to gain *entrée* to literary and artistic salons such as those run by Madame Viardot and Madame de Blocqueville. It was through these evenings, and some readily accepted invitations to dinner parties, that he managed to meet his literary idols, and came to know Gustave Flaubert, Alphonse Daudet, Maupassant, Zola, Edmond de Goncourt and, for James the most important, Ivan Turgenev. He wrote from Paris: 'I have been seeing something of Daudet, Goncourt, Zola; and there is nothing more interesting to me now than the effort and the experiment of their little group, with its truly infernal intelligence of art, form, manner—its intense artistic life. They do the only kind of work, today, that I respect; and in spite of their handling of unclean things, they are at least serious and honest. The floods of tepid soap and water which under the name of novels are being vomited forth in England, seem to me, by contrast, to do little honour to our race.'

In April of the following year he wrote to his father: 'You crave chiefly news, I suppose, about Ivan Sergeitch [Turgenev], whom I have lately seen several times. I spent a couple of hours with him at his room, some time since, and I have seen him otherwise at Mme. Viardot's. The latter invited me to her musical parties (Thursdays) and to her Sundays *en famille*. I have been to

a couple of the former and (as yet only) one of the latter . . . Her Sundays seem rather dingy and calculated to remind one of Concord "historical games", etc. But it was both strange and sweet to see poor Turgenev acting charades of the most extravagant description, dressed out in old shawls and masks, etc.' And further on he wrote the often-quoted extract: 'I had the other day a very pleasant call upon Flaubert, whom I like personally more and more each time I see him. But I think I easily—more than easily—see all around him intellectually. There is something wonderfully simple, honest, kindly, and touchingly inarticulate about him.'

Half a year had already passed when he wrote that letter, and there is already, to the observant eye, a shade of doubt. To obtain a word or two from Turgenev meant long and boring evening recitals at Madame Viardot's. Flaubert was difficult to see owing to his monastic way of life—his 'Benedictine existence' James called it—and although he was on terms of amity with Daudet and Edmond de Goncourt, there was no feeling of friendship or warmth with any of them. He found them all members of a closed circle, not open to outside opinions and influences, and, least of all, prepared to accept an unknown, reserved, perhaps rather pompous, American. So, more often than not, he was thrown back with undoubted chagrin and disappointment upon the not altogether pleasing company of his own compatriots in Paris. Whether they filled the gap satisfactorily we cannot tell; certainly he made full use of them in later years.

It is difficult to discover what really happened during that experimental year, for his own letters say little and his name is absent from the French writers' letters, journals and memoirs. Turgenev, however, did write to W. R. S. Ralston telling him to make a friend of Henry James and describing him as 'a very amiable, sensible, and gifted man, with a tendency towards *tristesse* which will not frighten you'. Turgenev paid more attention to the young Henry James than any of the others, and in return he received all James's affection and admiration. Perhaps James found the circle too close; perhaps he was snubbed or received some rebuff; whatever may have occurred James battled on in Paris, filling his brain with literature and painting, with every detail of the city, of the people, and of Parisian society, all of which he was to use later on. He wrote Parisian letters for

the New York journals and reviews and gave himself up to everything that France and her Capital had to offer him. That he was proud is obvious, and even if his reception was less enthusiastic than he had hoped and anticipated, he was determined to make up for it in other ways. At least those in America who were not altogether sympathetic to expatriate tendencies must not be allowed to suspect his failure. In May 1876 he wrote to W. D. Howells (another New England novelist, but one who never left America and who, in later years, was somewhat critical of James's preference for living in Europe) that he was 'turning into an old, and very contented Parisian: I feel as if I had struck roots in the Parisian soil, and were likely to let them grow tangled and tenacious there'. But later in the same letter some of the truth began to emerge, for he admits: 'I have seen a certain number of people all winter who have helped me to pass the time, but I have formed but one or two relations of permanent value, and which I desire to perpetuate. I have seen almost nothing of the literary fraternity, and there are fifty reasons why I should not become intimate with them. I don't like their wares, and they don't like any others; and besides they are not *accueillants*. Turgenev is worth the whole heap of them, and yet he himself swallows them down in a manner which excites my extreme wonder.' Yet he goes on to say: 'I interrupted this a couple of hours since to go out and pay a visit to Gustave Flaubert, it being his time of receiving, and his last Sunday in Paris, and I owe him a farewell. *He* is a very nice old fellow, and the most interesting man and the strongest artist in his circle. I had him for an hour alone, and then came in his "following", talking much of Zola's catastrophe—Zola having just had a serial novel [*L'Assommoir*] interrupted on account of protests from provincial subscribers against its indecency. The opinion apparently was that it was a bore, and that it could only do the book good on its appearance as a volume On my way down I met poor Zola climbing the staircase, looking very pale and sombre, and I saluted him with a flourish natural to a contributor who has just been invited to make his novel last longer yet . . .'

No doubt part of the trouble was that although he had a considerable admiration for their fearless innovations and experiments, their respect for language and form, and their passion for style—characteristics common to all the Realist

writers—he was revolted by their subjects. One of the reasons why he left America, and New England in particular, was the inhibiting and stifling atmosphere of puritanism. But in Paris he discovered the horrible truth: that he himself was equally puritanical and had just as pronounced a sense of morality. Again and again the reader of his reviews and critical essays will find him protesting against what he considers to be indecency. Another distressing factor was that he was unable to persuade the French writers either to read or to listen to him enthusing over George Eliot, who occupied second place in James's estimation of the greatest contemporary novelists—the first being Ivan Turgenev. He found the parochialism of the French writers exasperating and never failed to say so in his reports to America. In every respect it seems that their circle was a closed one.

In July he wrote to his brother from Étretat, where he had spent the summer months, '... my last layers of resistance to a long encroaching weariness and satiety with the French mind and its utterances have fallen from me like a garment. I have done with 'em, forever, and am turning English all over. I desire only to feed on English minds—I wish greatly I knew some. Easy and smooth-flowing as life is in Paris, I would throw it over tomorrow for an even small chance to plant myself for a while in England.' The inevitable disappointment had to be admitted. His disillusionment was complete, and it was plain to him that his experiment was a failure: indeed it would be to most young men at that particular stage of development. But, little as we know of the actual happenings of that year in Paris, it was clearly an invaluable experience. Even if he had been shocked by Flaubert's opening his door to him clad only in his dressing gown, he was compensated by an occasional hour in Turgenev's 'little green sitting-room' at Madame Viardot's.

Some of his disappointment can be read in the collection of essays which appeared in 1879 under the title *French Poets and Novelists*. These include, amongst others, critical comments on Musset, Gautier, Baudelaire, Balzac, George Sand, and a joint essay on Charles de Bernard and Flaubert, since Henry James did not deem Flaubert worthy of an article devoted entirely to himself. It is only fair to explain that these essays are not so much literary criticism as a list of James's likes and dislikes; for James (to invert his oft-repeated complaint against the French

novelists) was not so much interested in the truth about life as in the truth about art. And therefore the reader should not consider this book as a particular example of Henry James's criticism but simply as another sidelight on the development of his mind and thought.

In *French Poets and Novelists* it is Flaubert who suffers most. For James has singled him out as the one most affected by what he considers their greatest literary weakness—indecenty. As he wrote from Paris, 'novel and drama alike portray an incredibly superficial perception of the moral side of life. It is not only that adultery is their theme, but that the treatment of it is so monstrously vicious and arid!' This was, of course, a reference to *Madame Bovary* (the novel which pained him most) and to Edmond de Goncourt's *La Fille Elisa*. Again and again he emphasizes this point. 'Everything ran to form, and the successful books were apt to resemble little vases, skilfully moulded and chiselled, into which unclean things had been dropped.' And then: 'French literature abounds in books which have been pushed to the lengths which only a sort of artistic conspiracy of many minds could have reached . . .' Zola too came in for censure: 'Zola is the most thorough-going of the little band of out-and-out realists. Unfortunately the real for him means exclusively the unclean.' This attitude is perhaps a little surprising when one remembers that Henry James himself, in a very different way (perhaps unintentional) is not altogether free of suggestive writing. As Mr. Edmund Wilson has pointed out, *The Turn of the Screw* is filled with submerged sexual symbolism.

Everything was wrong with *Madame Bovary*. It lacked delicacy, charm and 'good taste', qualities which he particularly admired in the early novels of George Sand and (despite a certain vulgarity) in Pierre Loti's *Pêcheurs d'Islande*. Worse still, it lacked reserve, a quality which he especially understood and enjoyed in both Balzac and Turgenev and which was very much to his nineteenth-century New English taste. This feeling for the delicate handling of moral questions had also aroused his admiration for George Eliot (whom he was to meet the following year in London), and it was a quality which he ardently cultivated in his own writing. James preferred respectability to bohemianism and had a very definite code as to what was and what was not permissible in art, life and literature. Flaubert had observed none of the

fundamentals of this code. Of *Madame Bovary* James wrote: 'The accumulation of detail is so immense, the vividness of portraiture of people, of places, of time and hours, is so poignant and convincing, that one is dragged into the very current and tissue of the story; the reader himself seems to have lived in it all, more than any other novel he can recall. At the end the intensity of illusion becomes horrible; overwhelmed with disgust and pity he closes the book.' Yet *Madame Bovary* appealed to him more than the other novels of Flaubert, which he felt to be cold, hard, steely, uninspired and calculated literary exercises. As he wrote in the second of his three essays on Flaubert, '*Salammbô*, in which we breathe the air of pure aesthetics, is as hard as stone; *L'Education*, for the same reason, is as cold as death; *Saint-Antoine* is a medley of wonderful bristling metals and polished agates, and the drollery of *Bouvard et Pécuchet* (a work as sad as something perverse and puerile done for a wager) about as contagious as the smile of a keeper showing you through the ward of a madhouse'. At least *Madame Bovary* was coloured by a warmth of emotion, which took off the icy chill and made it more palatable. James felt that Flaubert had sacrificed his imagination, his emotions and even his life to his almost fruitless search for the perfect form, and that in the end it was only an 'immense ado about nothing'. In later years his criticism was less harsh and he even modified his opinion of *Madame Bovary*. Yet he always spoke of 'poor Flaubert', and described him as a great failure in art. For, despite his more lenient opinion, *Madame Bovary* always remained the beautifully worked out but indecent book which had won notoriety through the publicity of a court-room.

Baudelaire he found even less attractive, for the reason that he never really understood him. He completely misconstrued the title *Les Fleurs du Mal*, and talked of the poems as being full of 'rags and bad smells, lurid landscape and unclean furniture'. Although he admitted that Baudelaire possessed a certain talent and some vein of genius he dismissed him as 'childish'. After all, hadn't Hawthorne done it better?

So it was with most of the nineteenth-century French authors whom he read and met. Even his 'adored' Balzac did not escape unscathed, for James was horrified by his preoccupation with money and a little amazed by his obsession with the aristocracy. In spite of his respect and adoration he strongly criticized what

he termed Balzac's 'arrant charlatanism' and went on to say that 'It is probable that no equally vigorous mind was ever at pains to concoct such elaborate messes of folly. They spread themselves over page after page, in a close, dense, verbal tissue, which the reader scans in vain for some little flower of available truth.'

However, no matter what charges he laid at their door, the French novelists were closer than any others to his own particular conception of what contemporary literature should be. And while his personal relations with them were unsuccessful he had at least been able to see and talk to them. He could still respect their craftsmanship, their technical achievements and their pursuit of perfection. He could still, even if his experiment at living a literary life in Paris had also failed, benefit from their consciousness, their awareness and their very definite sense of vitality.

Henry James was not altogether to blame for his lack of success. Even had he been able to reconcile himself to the French way of thinking it is far from certain that he would have been accepted by the French writers, as is proved by the almost parallel experience of George Moore. Moore's acquaintanceship with Zola—no matter how it may have appeared to him in retrospect—was clearly slight. But whereas James kept silent about his failure, George Moore deliberately tried to obfuscate the facts. Yet in some respects he fared better than James, for he did meet Hugo, Mallarmé (he was invited to the Tuesday evenings), and the Impressionist painters, Manet, Degas, Renoir, and others. But he knew them no better than James knew Flaubert or Turgenev.

Before his year's stay was up James knew that it would be impossible for him to go on living in Paris and he began to consider a move to London. He excluded America as an alternative. London would, and did, prove more fruitful. Whatever the real reason for his decision, he had no intention of renouncing his meagre connections with France or French literature. His interest in all its latest developments was paramount, and even as an old man his curiosity was just as keen, for in 1914 he wrote to Edith Wharton asking her to send him Marcel Proust's *Du Côté de Chez Swann*. Perhaps he actually read the early volumes of *A la Recherche du Temps Perdu*; his opinion would have been unusually interesting, for stylistically he had much in common with Proust. Two-thirds of his literary criticism was devoted to French literature, and although he had but little appreciation of poetry

(he had a predilection for the works of Browning) it is significant that the only poetry he wrote about was that of Musset, Gautier and Baudelaire.

All through his life he made repeated visits to Paris and there were always friends with whom he kept in contact: One such was Alphonse Daudet, whose *Port Tarascon* he translated and published in 1903, another was Jacques-Emile Blanche. To the very end he had a lively, and not altogether typically American, interest in the latest manifestations of French culture. One visit to Touraine and Provence produced the travel book *A Little Tour in France*, and France provided the setting for several of his novels, among them *The Ambassadors*, *The American*, and the first part of *The Tragic Muse*.

But what he particularly derived from his sojourn in Paris was a sense of analysis. This essentially French faculty, which played such an important role throughout his work, enabled him to lead the novel into a channel hitherto completely unknown and to produce those fascinating prefaces to the collected edition of his works which are something unique in Anglo-Saxon literature. No matter what his feelings may have suffered during that year, it is quite obvious that it was in Paris in 1875 and 1876 that James learnt the craftsmanship of writing and the fundamentals of his art; it was there indeed that he discovered 'the figure in the carpet'. It is also obvious that had he not gone to Paris he would have missed an invaluable experience which greatly contributed to his own genius.

SELECTED NOTICES

NEW NOVELS

Auto Da Fé. By Elias Canetti. Jonathan Cape. 15s.

Prater Violet. Christopher Isherwood. Methuen. 5s.

Auto Da Fé. Leading Viennese critics consider this work one of the great novels of the century. Certainly it is a book one will not forget. Four hundred and sixty-four pages. With its voluminous incidents and all its meticulous detail it is immensely—but immensely—long. We do not get far without grasping that the author is a formidable pessimist. If there are any qualities in man which could make him attractive, or even passably tolerable—we do not get a glimpse of them here. (Except in the case it is true of one character who turns up at the end, brother to the hero—but then even he lives in order to be considered charming, one is given to understand.)

The story is enacted by a strange cast, a species of cunningly made clockwork German Grotesques, humpbacked, and otherwise deformed. The springs which make these toys work are their obsessions. One is obsessed by Erudition, another by Chess, another by the desire to sleep, a fourth by the wish to knock people about, a fifth by fat women, and so forth and so on. Other insides they have none.

Erudition is our hero: Professor Peter Kien. Existing only for books, he owns a famous library, four large rooms without any windows, in which he lives. No bathroom or dining room, the only furniture a washstand on wheels and a divan on which he sleeps among the books. He despises mankind (women-kind even more) and for this reason keeps his gaze focused either above or below people's faces; neither does he answer when he is spoken to. He does, however, hold conversations with the authors of his books. He will talk to a Confucius, a Buddha or a Socrates, by the hour; they smile at him, bow courteously, and give him good advice.

He has a housekeeper, stupid, old and repulsive; during her eight years of service with Kien, he has never given her a thought. But one day he surprises her in the kitchen, a velvet cushion on the table in front of her and upon it, a book, entitled: 'The Trousers of Herr Bradow'. To read it she has donned long white kid gloves. Comprehending in a flash, from this vision, that she is a fellow worshipper at the Shrine of literature, a delicate and fine soul (for even he himself has never been so careful of any book as to don white kid gloves to read it in), he proposes marriage to the old servant on the instant—egged on by Confucius. He is accepted, and the pair are wed. Afterwards, immediately upon their return to the windowless library, Kien, though never having thought upon a woman in his life before, proceeds (much to the reader's dismay) to make an appalling, formalized, half-hearted attempt to claim his marital rights upon the divan—which he has first thoughtfully spread over with good books. 'Inferior books he rejected, so as not to hurt the woman's feelings.' But the old hag, as soon as she has noted his purpose, in order to aid him, pushes aside upon the floor with a sweeping motion of her arm, all the books. That's done it! *On to the floor!* His beautiful books! And here really is the crest of the plot. The scales clatter down from Professor Kien's eyes. He has been horribly betrayed. His wife, by her totally unliterary action, has revealed herself in her true colours as a veritable fiend. Kien escapes to the lavatory, where he sits and weeps, leaving the lady to put on her ogress's stiff starched skirt again and to waggle her long, uneven ears.

From that moment, the great nightmare chase of revenge is on. The professor comes ricocheting down-hill without a pause until his death on the last page. After many adventures at the library, wherein Canetti holds up the professor's wife (as he does every woman in the book) as an Aunt Sally to be forever sadistically banged down and rolled in the mud, the infuriated old housekeeper eventually pounds Kien to a jelly and flings him out of the flat for dead. He picks himself up and wanders into the world. Incident follows incident: humpbacks, fat prostitutes in coloured chemises, people with square-cornered stomachs (through eating books), people who wipe their running noses on the wall, who sniff their arm-pits, who clutch the brothel landlady round the stomach with their long, crawling snake-like arms, all

screech and waddle and fight their way through the pages in throngs. It is round about here that one lies back and sighs and fans oneself. And round about here that the thought came to me of Christopher Wren's remark on the subject of Gothic: '... a manner of building of the greatest industry and expressive carving ... full of fret and lamentable imagery, sparing neither pains nor cost'.

It all ends up in a grand slam fight, from which the professor only escapes into the clutches of a posse of nightmare policemen. And even when he eventually gets back to his own block of flats, it is as the prisoner of a brutal caretaker. (This is the figure whose obsession is the wish to knock people about.) At last, long last, the professor's psychiatrist brother, Peter, leaves his lunatic asylum and comes to rescue him. By the expedient of running the professor through all the myths of ancient Greece, in one of the lengthy erudite passages of the book, he gains an idea—shrewd psychiatrist that he is, of what has in fact occurred. But the professor succeeds in eluding him. In a final orgasm of mania, Kien, in a chapter entitled 'The red cock', breaks into his own locked library again. He sets fire to his books and throws himself upon the flames; thus at last committing suttee by the burning corpse of his only love.

A story in which there is much to admire. And more to startle and exhaust. It is startling, for instance, that there is no conflict in any of the character's breasts—greed and ferocity everywhere completely carrying the day. And then people cut off each other's humps and spit upon them, dead women hungrily eat themselves as they lie putrefying upon the floor, and it is impossible to tell where the people's fancy stops and their action begins. Much to admire: yes. For what a feat it is on the part of the author, to have been able to give all this fantastic, dreamlike incident such a sharply defined body, however deformed. The whole thing materializes in front of one as if it were branded upon the senses by the devil himself. There is much original art, too, in the stylization of the characters' speech. Altogether the writing, with its pungency and power, with its classical terseness which is such an unexpected dress for the exotic images that it contains—the style is magnificent. But how much of this is due to Miss Veronica Wedgwood's translation? It would be interesting to know.

Well then ... after this drove of nightmare grotesques (both erudite and the reverse) have thundered over our heads, after one has shut the book, taken three aspirins, and opened the window—What is it all about? Can it be meant to be a political fable? One doesn't quite see how. A humorous book? Or maybe the message is that we are all of us mad. Why do the Viennese critics consider this work as one of the great novels of the century? Certainly it has unlimited virtuosity and size. But under the never-ending panorama of grotesque incident, under the overwhelming thoroughness and precision of factual documentation and meticulous detail—what is the essential quiddity? As I see it, underneath it all beats the heart of a brainy, imaginative little boy, once fatally betrayed by his nanny (a classic, taboo love, in her starched blue uniform), and numbed for ever after to every adult emotional issue, left with hostility and childish greeds alone riding the field. Out of the variety of human existence, out of the conflicts, and the interactions of the different forces one upon the other—the individual and society, Man and Destiny, rights and wrongs, blacks and

whites in whatever forms—a great work can be built. But out of this basic monotony, surely only a *tour-de-force* in the macabre.

Incidentally, one can imagine this story being an absolute smash hit, told after a good dinner, at the *Closerie des Lilas*, or somewhere of the sort (this in the old days, of course) by one of those distinguished foreigners with a gift of telling stories that raise the hair up off one's head. Twenty-five minutes I would allow him though, not a moment more.

We turn from Canetti to Isherwood's *Prater Violet*. Up to the surface again we bob, and there we stay. It is as if we had been ill, plunged in a fevered abyss, and now here we are once again, with mackintosh and latchkey, zooming out of the front door to try to find a taxi, for we are late.—'Eternity lost in the roar of the bus rounding the corner', as G.W. Stonier neatly puts it somewhere. This account of the making of a film at 'Bulldog Imperial Pictures' Studios, is limpid, witty and brief. Anything that is not entertaining about the excursion to the British film studio Mr. Isherwood has left out.

The author has taken up the line (tacitly) of addressing his words to a certain circle of people—people who know Mr. Isherwood's name, people who know all about what his values are, people who know what's what. The author carries on from there. The main point of the book is the portrait of Bergmann, the highbrow Central European director of the film. And an excellent portrait it is. The first account of him particularly, sitting at the Café Royal, is brilliant. Certainly a human being emerges from the page, clever, eccentric, passionate. Mr. Isherwood has been really interested in this man—at almost all the other characters he merely makes cracks. Bergmann's secretary for instance, Dorothy. Dorothy discusses the attractions of one of the young men, working on the set. She snaps out: 'Kids of his age are more trouble than they're worth. I like a man to be sophisticated if you know what I mean.' Dorothy scores her laugh here, and Mr. Isherwood proceeds methodically to the next anecdote. We think, at the time, that we do know what Dorothy means. But on second thoughts, we may feel after all we knew very little of what Dorothy meant, and that Mr. Isherwood doesn't propose to enlighten us any further. But the entertaining dialogue goes foaming along. Mr. Chatsworth of the Studios is the other great delight. After *Sole-Bonne-Femme* and *Crêpes Suzette* in the grill room, he waves his cigar, 'As he puffed it he seemed to grow larger than life size. His pale eyes shone with a prophetic light.

'For years I've had one great ambition. You'll laugh at me. Everyone does. They say I'm crazy. But I don't care.' He paused. Then announced solemnly, 'Tosca. With Garbo.' He sits back and waits for Bergmann and Isherwood's electrification. He says to Bergmann later, 'I bet I know what Isherwood's thinking. He's right, too, blast him. I quite admit it. I'm a bloody intellectual snob.'

All the same Chatsworth has character, and is a clever man. And Mr. Isherwood skilfully makes this felt.

And there are many others, all cunningly 'caught' whilst saying their piece. Altogether a most elegant piece of journalism this. We don't get the mark of the artist—significant architecture. But we do get a most stylish little pre-fabricated house—with a printed notice, hung rather unexpectedly, in the very last section that we walk through, which tells us about the builder of it,

and in what part of the country he is to be found. As a matter of fact (since we are admittedly on personal ground) we had rather been given to understand that he had lately taken a long journey . . . far away from home. But can this be so? There is certainly no trace here of any pilgrimage having been taken since the production of his last work.

JULIA STRACHEY

Les Amitiés Particulières. By Roger Peyrefitte. Jean Vigneau. 200frs.

THE subject of *Les Amitiés Particulières* is so absorbing that it is difficult to assess the workmanship that went to make it. Like adventure stories for children 'what happened' remains the vivid impression and one is only confusedly aware that the vehicle was adequate to its burden. This long novel describes the first year at a Catholic school of a boy of fourteen, and it almost shocks by the clearness with which the experiences of that age are evoked: most so-called adults, although they are often merely hammering away at problems which would never have arisen if their education had been different, seem to drop an iron curtain on their school life. Otherwise the 'toughs' and the 'successes' who extol their educational system would long ago have been outlawed by the memory of the pathetic creature who first learned to be tough as an over-compensation and the lonely little schemer who always had to be on the alert to retain his superiority. But probably the most important thing to which parents blind themselves is the fact that children expelled into boarding-school enter a world in which their homes are no longer a reality, a world with its own laws and for which only two qualities are any real help: beauty and intelligence. From this world their parents are excluded, partly through defence mechanism and partly because here the young and the old are clearly ranged—as antagonists. Overtures to the opposite camp are made less in a spirit of candour than as a move in a guerrilla war, and quislings are ruthlessly condemned by their own side and despised by their opponents. If only the distressed parents who find their child 'changed'—'he doesn't confide in me any more'—would peep through the curtain at their own youth they would perhaps remember the area of their hearts that was turned to stone for ever in the twilight of the first night at school when they lay in bed calculating their new future, and it would never be forgotten that although the child is sent away to learn to be independent and deal with the 'world', the world is apt to be 'dealt with' in the pattern of school life, or else, present so startlingly different an appearance that the lessons learnt on the playing fields become a boomerang in the hands of society. Through laziness it is not admitted that all upper-class education is now simply 'the formation of character', a training for endurance. But in this huge workshop there is a minority section, whose products—at first sight indistinguishable from those of all the other schools—bear, on closer inspection, a different trade mark, for Catholic education has the additional and specific aim of training its pupils to remain Catholics and where possible, i.e. where it is expedient, to proselytize their fellows. Since in most countries Catholics are in the minority and liable to be assailed by intellectual arguments which have certainly gained in momentum during the last two centuries, this preparation has all the thoroughness that characterizes the activities of minorities. What can be roughly termed the

'Jesuitical' education is perhaps the most perfect weapon devised for entrapping the child, for it respects the intellect and recognizes that emotion is many-edged and deliberately sets out to use these two manifestations for its own ends; no area of the human personality is safe from the priests' probing cauterization, and it is this process that is so well described in *Les Amitiés Particulières*.

Georges de Sarre, aristocratic, rich, and good-looking, is sent at the age of fourteen to the College of Saint-Claude because 'son père avait voulu lui faire compléter, par l'internat, ce qu'il appelait sa formation morale'. But in addition to beauty, Georges has the other great quality: he is clever; and with the sharp-wittedness of all children whose family life has not already dealt them a stunning blow, he regards his new world as a battlefield, measures his chances of success—he can probably be first in French composition—and looks around for an ally, or for what as an only child he most wants—a friend. Mutual attraction is a sharper magnet among children than among adults, for it is not dulled by association with past wounds, it is more generous because no specific objective forms an image behind the impulse, it is more romantic because children do not know that love comes to an end. The most singular difference between Catholic and other education is one of colour; in the Catholic school all the senses are attacked, everything shines, candles and lamps, scarlet wounds twinkle out of the pictures of martyrs, incense creeps through the cracks and half-open doors, the organ booms accompaniment, and ritual, with its atavistic tom-tom calls, begins and rounds off every day. Against this background Georges finds his first friend, Lucien, who has already spent a year at school. They sit beside each other in chapel during the retreat with which the new term begins, and a boy singing:

Viens, Esprit d'amour,
Descends aujourd'hui dans mon âme,
Viens, Esprit d'amour,
Viens; elle est à toi sans retour,

is followed by another reciting ' . . . Travaillez à détacher votre cœur de l'amour des choses visibles; car ceux qui suivent l'attrait de leurs sens souillent leur âme et perdent la grâce de Dieu'.

Georges looks round the mysterious chapel 'le supérieur l'employa à lire et expliquer un texte de Bossuet sur l'amour divin. Il ne s'agissait que de l'amour à Saint-Claude'. Under Lucien's tutelage Georges is introduced to the regime of the school. The priests in their vigil over these young souls use the daily communion as the measure of their success. Approaching the sacraments in a spirit of sacrilege appears horrifying to the adult mind, which is trained to think of the consequences of any action; to children, who are single-minded, it is easy to commit sacrilege to gain a greater advantage—that of being left alone. The great Jesuitical fallacy that ends and means are different things and that the one does justify the other, is effortlessly absorbed: 'Au goûter, Lucien était venu auprès de Georges. Il était gentil à voir en mangeant sa grenade. Il en donna un quartier à Georges, qui lui offrit son nougat.

—J'appellerais cela, dit celui-ci, cultiver l'esprit de sacrifice.

—C'est plutôt, répondit Lucien, cultiver l'esprit du collège. Ici, tout l'art est de savoir présenter les choses.'

Georges soon discovers that Lucien already has a friend, André, and that André writes poems to Lucien which the latter keeps in his *cahier de retraite*. In the muddled frenzy of a first jealousy Georges asks to see the Superior and goes clutching one of the poems which he has stolen. In the ante-room he feels frightened—after all he is one of the boys, and so against authority—and with the superstition that is common to all children and savages, he hides the poem, leaving its discovery to fate. It is found, André is expelled, but unfortunately, Lucien, under this direct attack from the hand of God, ‘becomes converted’. ‘Lucien réfléchissait; . . . “Tu viens, lui dit-il, de me confirmer ce que je pensais: je n’ai été préservé du malheur d’André que par miracle. C’est Dieu qui est là-dessous.” Il chercha à voir l’heure à sa montre-bracelet . . . “Voilà! dit-il. A partir de maintenant 10h. 35, aujourd’hui 6 octobre, je suis converti.”’

So Georges is left with a guilty conscience and a pedagogic little saint in the next bed, instead of an *ami particulier*. M. Peyrefitte lets himself go on the incredible antics that a young *dévot* will perform; he has remembered it all, medals, scapulars, indulgences, holy thoughts written down in little note-books, and he explains with one nice touch how such a transformation can occur:

‘La gravure la plus chère au cœur de Lucien semblait être celle de Sainte Thérèse de l’Enfant Jésus et de la Sainte Face, qui était accompagnée de cette inscription autographe: “J’ai soif d’amour”, et portant un “bout d’étoffe ayant touché à la servante de Dieu”. C’était sa relique. Après l’avoir laissée longtemps au-dessus des autres dans la boîte, il finit par la mettre à l’intérieur de son calepin; il pouvait ainsi la contempler plus souvent, et il la baisait quand il croyait que Georges ne le regardait pas.’

Georges remains affectionate towards Lucien but his first feeling evaporates under this cold douche of holy water, and it is only towards the end of the term that he sees on the other side of the chapel a younger boy whose beauty makes him remarkable. Beauty—Saint-Claude is a hymn in its praise, like the moral stories the children are told: ‘L’anecdote d’aujourd’hui était en l’honneur de Saint Edmond: Ecolier se promenant avec des camarades, il venait de les quitter pour ne pas entendre leurs discours pervers, lorsqu’un enfant d’une parfaite beauté se présenta devant lui, et lui dit avec grâce: “Je te salue, mon bienaimé”. Edmond demeurant tout interdit, l’enfant ajouta: “Ne me reconnais-tu donc pas?—Tu dois te tromper, lui répondit Edmond.—Comment! c’est moi qui suis toujours à tes côtés quand tu es à l’école, et qui t’accompagne partout où tu vas. Mon nom est Jésus”’.

‘Quelles curieuses histoires, celles du predicateur! Toujours, il y était question de la beauté, ainsi que dans l’histoire grecque.’

Now that he has found a creature worthy of his affections, Georges adopts all the possible tactics to make acquaintance. He manages to alter his place in the file for communion so as to be next to Alexandre; now it is he who writes, or rather plagiarizes, poems for the young boy, and finally they meet in secret and discover their feelings are mutual. Georges’ life is now taken up by his first love—probably the only one that is ever whole-hearted—and here he comes up against the full weight of the college. The question of sex is hardly important; love to Georges and Alexandre is the vague romantic absorption in another person, the exchanging of trifling gifts, etc., but the Jesuit discipline

is less interested in sex than in the danger which a private emotion threatens to their system. Two children who love each other create a world they cannot enter and their whole object is to control, utterly, every thought and feeling. Friendship must be healthy, i.e. boring, or it must be stamped out, but priests, like all totalitarians, forget that their methods can be adopted by the enemy. The intelligence they are training for one war can be used for another. As Alexandre says: '... Et pourquoi céderions-nous sans cesse? Parce que nous sommes des enfants, aurions-nous toujours tort? Les enfants ne sont-ils pas des êtres vivants? Seraient-ils les seuls a n'avoir pas le droit d'aimer? ...'

Georges and Alexandre meet secretly and Lucien, whose conversion evaporated mysteriously on receipt of a letter from André, drops his scapulars and becomes an accomplice. If danger threatens, the remedy is simple: a mass presentation at communion, a false confession. Everything has its cover. In the holidays Georges finds a postcard of a Grecian statue which reminds him of Alexandre. The statue is in the Vatican and when the superior discovers the reproduction in Georges' wallet, his suspicions are forcibly calmed by the sanctity of the place where the original resides—the new Rome casts a protecting cloak over Athens. This is the clue to the real spirit of Catholic education, the double vision which is not hypocrisy, as is so often supposed, but simply a mental twist which grows out of a life where reality and appearance are seldom the same: 'Georges passa devant son ancien lycée. Il se demanda s'il lui aurait mieux valu ne jamais aller à Saint-Claude, mais écarta cette pensée qu'une seule image suffisait à rendre sacrilège. Indépendamment d'Alexandre, cette année d'internat religieux l'avait enrichi plus que ses nombreuses années d'externat au lycée. Ce n'était pas comme le supérieur l'aurait dit, à cause de la communion quotidienne. C'était à cause de ce mélange perpétuel du sacré et du profane, qui donnait aux moindres choses un reflet particulier; c'était à cause de cette lutte entre les élèves et les prêtres, digne de celle du chrétien dans le monde. La "vie spirituelle intense" qu'on menait publiquement labas, alimentait une autre vie, d'autant plus intense qu'elle devait se cacher.'

But ultimately children are powerless against authority; a rendezvous between Georges and Alexandre is discovered by their confessor, who, being on the whole nicer and simpler than most priests, understands the full deception practised by these models of purity. He decides to deal with the situation himself, in the confessional, which gives Georges the opportunity of rectifying the situation. Georges confesses his love, simulates repentance, declares his intention of abnegating all future relations with Alexandre, and is able to convince the priest that their relations were always 'innocent'—which is true. The priest agrees not to report the matter if Georges will send him all Alexandre's letters so that he can give them to the younger boy in the holidays as a proof of the sincerity of Georges' repentance. Since the discovery Georges has been unable to talk to Alexandre, but he agrees to this course as the only means of preventing expulsion. He assumes that the younger child has reached his own stage of duplicity and will understand his move. On the first day home Georges posts to the priest all the letters, the lock of hair and other relics he has received from Alexandre and plans to visit the child's home in secret to reassure him. But if Georges has learnt too well the lessons of the college, Alexandre, perhaps as the younger member, has preserved some

candour, and the day after the letter arrives Georges reads in the Catholic newspaper in the *Faits Divers*

'Un Enfant s'empoisonne Accidentellement.

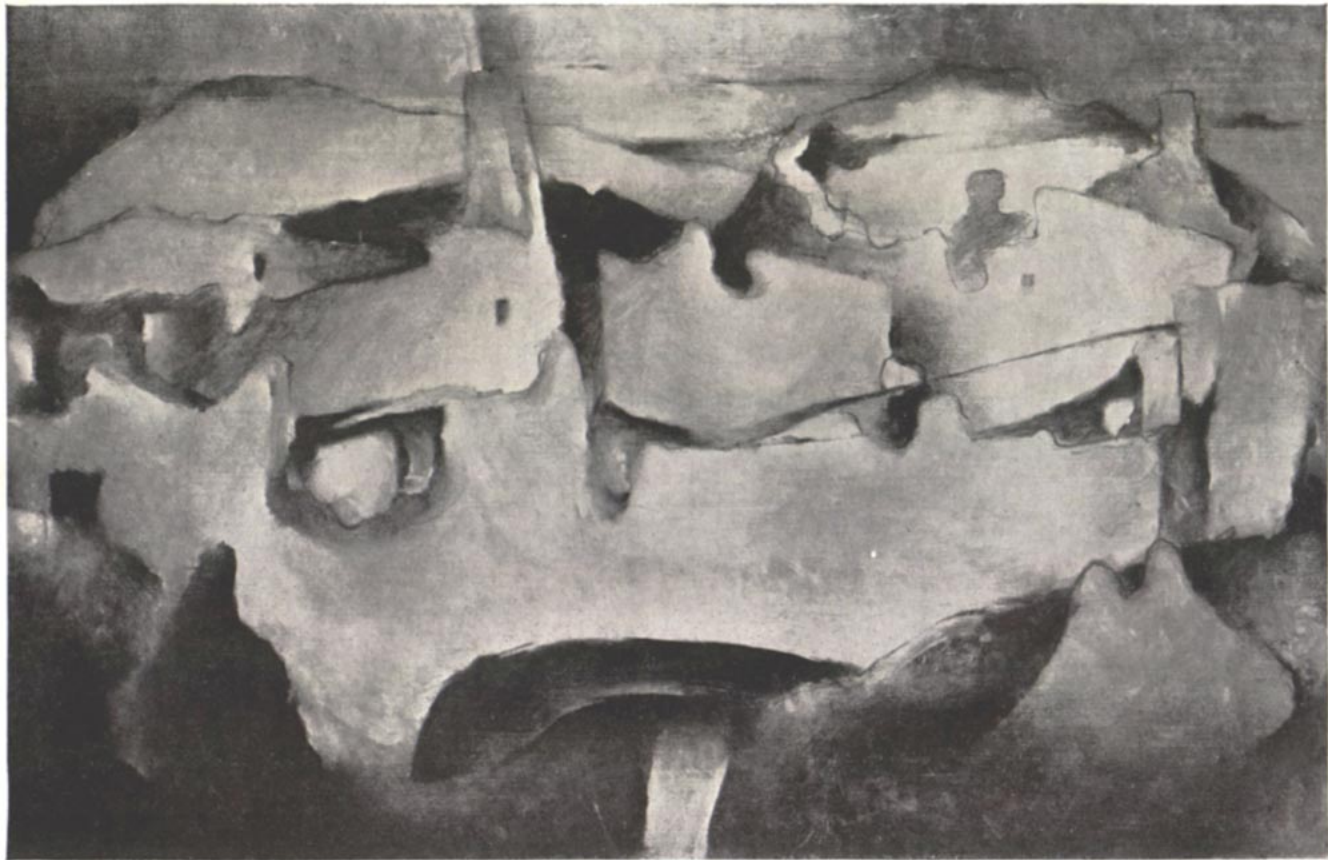
S. . . . , 14 juillet.

'Hier après-midi, le jeune Alexandre Motier, âgé de douze ans et demi, a absorbé un toxique violent qu'il avait pris pour un remède. Le malheureux enfant, victime de son erreur fatale, n'a pu être rappelé à la vie.' Alexandre is the victim of his failure to learn his school's real lesson, and Georges has completed his 'formation morale'.

As a work of art *Les Amitiés Particulières* cannot compete with *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, but its object is also slightly different. Joyce's problem was largely an intellectual and a social one, which are points never tackled by Monsieur Peyrefitte, perhaps because the French are less pre-occupied with the status of things of the mind, and class distinctions are deliberately excluded from Saint-Claude, whose pupils are all drawn from one area of society. But what *Les Amitiés Particulières* explains so well is that additional twist given by the Catholics to the mistakes made in all boarding-school education: the great error of such education is to treat the school years which are so much a part of life as a preparation for life, a kind of Spartan training against some future excursion into Athens; but all that happens is that the world turns out to be a shoddy replica of school, the candid eye is lost for ever, and the child who has lived a whole life-time he was made to understand was unreal, either wearily accepts situations whose importance he finds it hard to believe, or, better warned by some almost atavistic battle-cry, never commits himself at all for fear of tearing open some ancient wound. But the Catholics go one stage further. Their approach is *personal*, each separate child must be controlled, every secret corner of his heart disinterred, and to do this they tear away any belief in the support that one human being can give to another; but nothing is overt, there are no hearty lectures on responsibility, etc., the acid is dropped in little by little until everything is eaten away; when you no longer trust another human being you can get on with the business of trusting God; when you have seen through the world you can never become its victim but can fight it with the only unanswerable weapon—cynical despair; when you have learnt the lesson of the double vision, action and emotion are equally meaningless.

This is the heritage of Catholic education that made it possible for the Church to be a temporal power, for a society to flourish in which divorce was impossible, but where every wife had a lover and every husband a mistress; a society where *volupté* had meaning and *love* had very little. It is an attitude of mind very different from that of the Catholic convert and which always presents a riddle to the Puritan, but it is one which those who went to Catholic schools always recognize in each other, members of a secret society who, when they meet, huddle together, temporarily at truce with the rest of the world, while they cautiously, untrusting, lick each other's wounds.

SONIA BROWNELL.

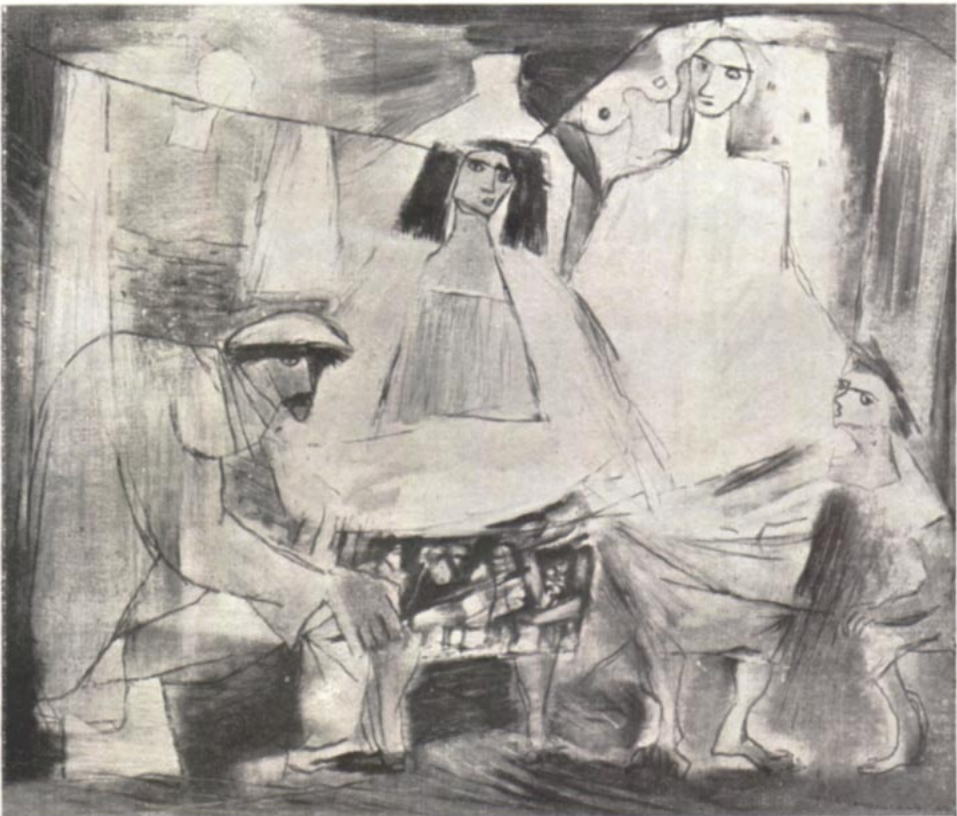


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